

Iran may go to World Court

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's prime minister said Sunday that unless more than \$500 million in Iranian assets held in America were returned within a "short period of time," his country would take the case to the World Court. Prime Minister Hussein Musavi did not indicate what time period he had in mind. His comments were reported by the official Islamic Republic News Agency, monitored in Nicosia. Negotiations on return of the money broke off Wednesday in The Hague, and Iran blamed the United States for failure to reach an agreement so far. But the talks are to resume later. "If there is no result, Iran will bring up the case in the World Court" in The Hague, Mr. Musavi was quoted as saying. The Iran-U.S. claims tribunal ruled in August that the \$507.7 million held at the New York Federal Reserve Bank should be returned to Iran, and the United States had agreed in principle. The tribunal set a Dec. 20 deadline for the two countries to settle the repayment issue without resorting to international arbitration. However, even though the deadline passed without a repayment agreement, both parties agreed to forego that provision and continue their talks.

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Kuwait names new chief-of-staff

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait on Sunday named a new army chief-of-staff to replace Major-General Abdullah Farraj Al Ghanim, who was said by diplomats to have retired. Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Rashid Abdul Aziz Al Rashid said Brigadier Mazyayyeh Abdul Al Rahman Al Sane had been appointed to the post by emir decree and promoted to major-general.

Pakistan says 6 killed in bombing

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (R) — Afghan warplanes killed six Pakistanis and injured 14 when they bombed a village near the border, Pakistan police said Sunday. Fifteen bombs were dropped on the Pakistani village of Arandu Saturday afternoon, a senior police officer for the area said. Four people were killed instantly and a woman and a child died later of their injuries, he said. Several houses were destroyed, he said.

Libya mobilising troops along coast

LONDON (AP) — Libya has ordered all demobilised soldiers to rejoin their units immediately to fortify coastal areas, Libyan Radio reported Sunday. An announcement from the armed forces general command, broadcast by Libyan Radio and monitored in London, said all those who failed to obey the order would be "legally brought" to account and their demobilisation cancelled. Libya announced in October that thousands of Libyans had begun fortifying coastal areas with trenches, barbed wire and mines.

Iran says over 400 killed in floods

NICOSIA (AP) — Recent floods in southern Iran killed 424 people, ruined 1,324 villages and destroyed 1,000 bridges, Tehran Radio reported Sunday. The radio quoted Jafar Besharati, the official in charge of the relief headquarters, as saying more than 10,000 homes and 1,700 kilometres of roads were destroyed. Mr. Besharati said the floods caused 120 billion rials (\$1.6 billion) in damage.

Bomb shatters windows in Tehran

TEHRAN (R) — A hand-made bomb thrown into a shopping mall in north Tehran during the night broke windows but caused no casualties, Tehran police said. Ettelaat newspaper quoted a police statement as saying the bomb contained about 1.8 kilograms of explosives. It was the first bomb explosion in the Iranian capital this year. A total of 25 people were reported killed in five blasts in the city during 1986.

Kahane questioned

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli police questioned militant Rabbi Meir Kahane on Sunday on suspicion of inciting rebellion for suggesting Jews consider forming another anti-Arab terrorist underground.

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No let-up seen in Amal-PLO battles

Syria and Lebanon agree to receive Arab League panel on 'camps war'

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Gunfire and explosions echoed from two Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut on Sunday and clashes were also reported at the Rashidiyeh settlement in South Lebanon.

Palestinians said Rashidiyeh had come under sporadic sniper, mortar and machinegun fire since a supply convoy reached the besieged camp on Saturday and evacuated 80 refugees.

Iranian mediators persuaded Shi'ite Muslim Amal militiamen to let the relief column into the battered shantytown they have ringed since Sept. 30. The Iranians arranged safe passage for a similar convoy on Dec. 13.

Both sides blamed each other for continued fighting in the bitter "camps war," now in its fourth month.

Battles for control of five Palestinian shantytowns in Beirut and the south have claimed at least 700 lives since Sept. 30.

Militias reopened the main coastal road between Beirut and the port of Sidon, 40 kilometres south, after blocking it for several hours following the deaths of two Druze militiamen in an ambush, police said (See page 2).

In Tunis, a statement issued after a pan-Arab committee meeting said late Saturday Syria and Lebanon had agreed to receive the special Arab League committee of foreign ministers to discuss ways of ending the "camps war" in Lebanon, but no date has been set.

Syria, which opposed the setting up last month of the committee of seven foreign ministers and Arab League Secretary General Chadi Kibbi, sent a message to Arab

League headquarters on Saturday, inviting the committee to Damascus, Arab diplomatic sources said.

The committee had been prepared in a compromise move, to send only some of its members of Syria, but President Hafez Al Assad invited all of them, the sources added.

The committee was formed at an emergency Arab League meeting nearly two weeks ago requested by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which accuses Syria of direct involvement with Amal against Palestinians in the siege of the refugee camps in Lebanon.

Diplomatic sources told Reuters a willingness by Syria, the main powerbroker in Lebanon, to see the committee was crucial to the Arab League mission.

The committee issued after dinner discussions said the committee had "taken note of the positive replies of Syria and

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Hawke offers limited Australian role in Mideast peace efforts

Special from Sydney

ON THE eve of a three-nation visit to the Middle East later this month, Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke has cautiously offered to assume a mediator's role in the Arab-Israeli conflict but at the same time ruled out any Australian pressure on any party involved in the Middle East dispute.

In an interview with the Australian Focus on the Middle East magazine, Mr. Hawke said his country did not want to impose itself as a mediator in the conflict, but was ready to exert its good relations with Israel and the Arab World if the parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict asked it to do so.

The interview was made available to the Jordan Times prior to Focus' first issue which is due to appear in Australia on Jan. 6.

Mr. Hawke, who is due in Jordan on Jan. 23 on a two-day



Bob Hawke

visit on the first leg of the trip which will also take him to Israel and Egypt, told the magazine Australia believed that any solution to the Palestinian problem should be based on the right of all countries in the region to live in peace and secure borders.

Israeli President Chaim Herzog visited Australia last year and Mr. Hawke's talks with him covered the Middle East situation.

Replying to questions in the interview with Focus, Mr. Hawke said:

— Australia will not exert pressure on any party involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict. "I am really first going as a listener and not as some sort of advocate."

— Australia supports the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including that to self-determination, within the framework of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. "And we will be saying to all those whom we speak that any settlement must recognise those two fundamentals. Just how that should be worked out — the rights of the Palestinian people — it's quite premature to say."

— He may meet some of the Palestinian leaders in the occupied

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Britain was prepared to go to war with Israel in 1956

LONDON (AP) — Britain was prepared to go to war with Israel in 1956 because of fears that Israel might invade Jordan, a British newspaper quoted secret government documents published last week as saying.

The Mail on Sunday quoted the documents as saying British defence chiefs drew up a detailed plan codenamed "Operation Encounter" in late 1955-56 for massive air, sea and land strikes on Israel.

The plan was subsequently endorsed by Prime Minister Anthony Eden but was never put into operation because the situation in the Middle East changed and Britain ending up fighting on the same side as the Israelis in the 1956 Suez clash with Egypt, the paper said.

The officers who approved... the military adventure included the most distinguished names from World War II, the paper said. They included Lord Mountbatten, then Britain's first sea lord, General Sir Gerald Templer representing the army, Air Chief Marshal Sir Ronald Ivelaw-Chapman and Field Marshal Sir John Harding, then governor of Cyprus, the paper said.

Reagan enters hospital for tests and surgery

WASHINGTON (R) — President Ronald Reagan, smiling and waving to well-wishers, entered a military hospital on Sunday for his semi-annual post-cancer checkup and a prostate operation described as common for men his age.

Mr. Reagan, at 75 the oldest president in U.S. history, told reporters as he left the White House he felt "fine — great."

Accompanied by his wife Nancy, the president arrived by helicopter at the Bethesda naval medical centre a few minutes later.

He expected to be hospitalised for three to four days and the first lady planned to remain at his side the first night.

Immediately after Mr. Reagan's arrival, a team of doctors from Minnesota's world-renowned Mayo Clinic were to administer a series of tests to check for any recurrence of the colon cancer he suffered in 1985.

On Monday the president will receive a local anesthetic for an operation to relieve discomfort caused by an enlarged prostate gland. Specimens from the gland will also be tested for cancer.

The post-cancer tests included cat scan X-rays as well as a colonoscopy, a procedure involving use of a flexible fiberoptic instrument to internally examine the entire length of Mr. Reagan's colon.

The White House was scheduled to make public the findings later Sunday.

Medical experts said there is a ten per cent chance doctors will find cancerous cells in the tissue removed from Mr. Reagan's urinary tract, but they said that is ordinarily no cause for great alarm because the type of cancer usually found tends to spread very slowly.

The experts said the principal risk of the surgery is from excessive bleeding, but that this is easily remedied with a blood transfusion.

Mr. Reagan's hospitalization

(Continued on page 3)

Consultative Economic Council studies local industries and competitiveness

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Consultative Economic Council held its second meeting on Sunday under the chairmanship of the prime minister, Mr. Zaid Rifai, and discussed issues pertaining to economic activity in the Kingdom, with special focus on production costs, transport and funding new technology for local industries as well as the marketing policies inside and outside the country.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the meeting covered issues related to production taxes levied from protected local industries and costs of transportation, including fees

charged at Aqaba port on exports, and their impact on the international competitiveness of Jordanian products.

Also discussed during the meeting were methods and procedures related to funding transfer and acquisition of technology for local industries and the role of the banking sector in financing national investments and streamlining the process of commercial lending and borrowing.

The council was formed in September, 1986, under the chairmanship of the prime minister, with the aim of activating the economic sector and achieving the goals of comprehensive national development. It held its

first meeting on Dec. 4.

The formation of the council stemmed from the important role of investment and saving in reactivating fruitful economic activities and in recognition of the importance of close cooperation between the public and private sectors in increasing saving and investment and in achieving the goals of comprehensive development in the country, said a Cabinet statement issued at the time.

The council serves as a permanent body for free dialogue and exchange of views and consultation between representatives of the public and private sectors in the country.

Sabah returns home after visits to Syria and Iraq

Kuwait finds support for efforts towards Arab-Islamic unity

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah returned Sunday from surprise visits to Syria and Iraq, saying he had found support for efforts to overcome obstacles to Arab and Islamic causes.

Kuwait's emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, is scheduled to host an Islamic summit on Jan. 26. Sheikh Sabah's trip was seen by diplomats as a bid to ensure that Presidents Hafez Al Assad of Syria and Saddam Hussein of Iraq attend the conference in person, rather than send envoys.

Neither Syria nor Iraq, bitter political and ideological foes — Damascus supports Tehran in the Iran-Iraq war — have yet said who will head their delegations to

Kuwait.

Both are leading Islamic powers and the presence of Mr. Assad and Mr. Hussein, diplomats said, would add stature to the talks and to any proposals they could be persuaded to support jointly.

Sheikh Sabah flew to Damascus on Saturday and then on to Baghdad with personal messages from the emir for the two leaders, which he said dealt with bilateral ties and Arab and Islamic affairs.

The Kuwait News Agency, in a brief report on the minister's return, said he "found understanding and support for what the emir seeks to achieve in the spirit of cooperation to overcome all obstacles facing Arab and Islamic causes."

Diplomats said Sheikh Sabah's

diplomatic swing appeared to be aimed also at building on earlier pan-Arab contacts designed to promote a rapprochement between Damascus and Baghdad.

The Iraqi News Agency gave no details of the verbal message to President Hussein from Sheikh Jaber other than to say it dealt with bilateral relations and the current Arab situation.

Sheikh Sabah earlier discussed the Islamic summit and regional issues with Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz.

Mr. Aziz is due to begin an official visit to Algeria on Monday, Algeria's APS news agency reported.

Meanwhile, Iran's national

(Continued on page 3)

Cypriot boats run Israeli gaunt let

LARNACA, Cyprus (R) — Two Cypriot ferries docked safely on Sunday from return trips to Lebanon as Israel's foreign minister said one had been intercepted to try to prevent Palestinian attacks.

An Israeli gunboat on Friday stopped the 3,680-tonne Sunny Boat with 64 passengers as it sailed of the Lebanese coast for Jounieh, 130 kilometres north of Israel's border with Lebanon.

The navy found Palestinian fighters on board and sent the ship home to Cyprus, an Israeli spokesman said.

The Sunny Boat arrived in Jounieh on Sunday with 250 passengers while the 8,187-tonne Empress unloaded at dawn in Larnaca after picking up 600 passengers from the Lebanese port. Neither ship reported any incidents on the seven-hour sea journey.

"We don't interfere with what are called innocent boats, harmless boats," Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said on armed forces radio. "But so long as we receive information of movement of terrorists or weapons that could endanger Israel, we naturally take preventive actions," Mr. Peres said.

A foreign ministry spokesman said Israel was "looking into" a strong Cyprus government protest over the interception.

The Sunny Boat's captain and agents deny that it ferries Palestinian fighters to the "camps war" which has raged for three months between Palestinians and the Shi'ite Amal militia in Beirut and South Lebanon.

The passenger list showed 36 Lebanese, one Iraqi and 27 passengers from nine non-Arab countries on board last Friday when the ship was turned back to Cyprus.

Amal said it had captured a Palestinian at a Beirut checkpoint who admitted arriving from Cyprus with 23 others on a rightist militia boat during Christmas.

In Beirut, a "Lebanese Forces" militia statement denied that it was running Palestinians into

(Continued on page 3)

Iraqi jets hit tanker

BAHRAIN (Agencies) — Iraqi warplanes attacked and damaged a Liberian-flag tanker just south of Iran's Kharg Island oil terminal in the northern Gulf early Sunday, shipping sources quoted by Reuters and AP said. The sources said the 61,614-tonne Maternorm had just taken on a load of Iranian crude oil and was heading south for Larak Island when the jets attacked. The Maternorm was working the so-called "Iranian shuttle" run, ferrying crude from the Kharg area to the mouth of the Gulf for transshipment into export tankers. The extent of damage to the tanker was not known and there was no word of casualties. Sunday's attack was the second this year by Iraqi aircraft on Gulf ships carrying Iranian crude. Another shuttle tanker, the Cypriot-flag Galeri, was hit on Friday in the same area. Later Sunday, a military spokesman in Baghdad said Iraqi warplanes dealt a "very large maritime target an accurate and effective hit" near the Iranian coast. The Iraqis often use the term large maritime target to refer to tankers they raid in the vicinity of Kharg, Kharg accounts for more than 90 per cent of Iran's crude oil exports.

Israeli helicopters attack S. Lebanese villages; 3 killed

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Israeli helicopter gunships attacked several villages on Sunday in U.N.-policed South Lebanon on Sunday and police said at least three people were killed and eight wounded.

Police said at least four helicopters were involved in the attack, raking roads and fields around Baraschite and nearby villages with machinegun fire.

The raid, the first Israel has staged in Lebanon this year, was an apparent reprisal for an attack last week by pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) fighters on two posts near Baraschite held by the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia.

Fifteen SLA men and two Hizbollah fighters were reported killed in the clash, during which Hizbollah overran SLA posts and captured an Israeli-supplied M-113 armoured troop carrier.

In Tel Aviv, an Israeli army spokeswoman said the helicopters attacked houses in Khirbet Seim and Qabrikha, said to have been used by Hizbollah for attacks on the Israeli-declared "security zone" in South Lebanon.

The two villages lie some eight kilometres north of Baraschite, which is on the edge of the SLA-held zone eight kilometres from the Israeli border.

Israeli aircraft raided targets in Lebanon 18 times last year. Most of the attacks were aimed at Palestinian camps.

Lebanese police confirmed that the main targets of Sunday's attack were the villages of Khirbet Seim and Qabrikha in the Ghazianah-controlled zone of the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

SLA spokesmen had charged that last week Hizbollah attackers infiltrated into Baraschite through UNIFIL's territory, and vowed reprisals.

On Dec. 24, Israeli troops and attack helicopters hit a Lebanese village outside the "security zone" in the eastern sector of South Lebanon.

Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin last month confirmed newspaper reports that Israeli pilots had refrained from bombing guerrilla targets in Lebanon in order to help the United States free its hostages held there.

The reports said the United States had asked Israel to avoid hitting the Iranian-backed Hizbollah to aid American efforts to secure the release of hostages.

"More than two years ago, there was a United States request to us about hitting or not hitting certain guerrilla targets in Lebanon in connection with the American hostages," Rabin said.

O'Connor visits Herzog's home/office in Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — In a dramatic turnabout Cardinal John O'Connor visited Israeli President Chaim Herzog Sunday making him the highest-ranking Vatican official to visit the office of an Israeli leader in the occupied Holy City of Jerusalem.

The Roman Catholic archbishop of New York, who had agreed as a compromise to meet Mr. Herzog at his home, seemed embarrassed by a barrage of reporters' questions asking if he was aware the meeting was held in the office wing of Mr. Herzog's residence.

Cardinal O'Connor said he did not know the 60-minute meeting was in Mr. Herzog's office and said, "if anyone in officialdom here thought that by coming here I was coming to the president's office then there's been a very grave misunderstanding. I would regret that very, very much."

"I would be terribly disappointed if I were allowed to think I was coming on an informal residential visit when in fact I was visiting an office," he added.

The colourful prelate whose week-long Middle East tour has

been shrouded in controversy also said he had not sought Vatican consent before the meeting.

"I have to believe that I have just informally visited his residence and since that was never at question there was no need for any 'clearance,'" Cardinal O'Connor said.

Cardinal O'Connor is scheduled to meet with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres at his Jerusalem residence on Monday morning.

Earlier, Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro said the cardinal's meetings with Mr. Herzog and Mr. Peres would not violate the Holy See's policy.

Navarro told AP in Rome that the meetings would only be "acts of courtesy," noting that Pope John Paul II had met Mr. Peres last year and other popes met Israeli leaders in the past at the Vatican.

The meeting with Mr. Peres could be seen as a "reciprocal" gesture for Mr. Peres' visit to Cardinal O'Connor's New York home last year, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Investigators seek clue to Varig crash

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast (Agencies) — Investigators hunted through jungle outside Abidjan on Sunday looking for the cause of a Brazilian airline crash as doctors fought to keep one of the two survivors alive.

Forty-nine of the 51 passengers and crew on board Varig Flight RG 797 to Rio and Sao Paulo died when the airliner crashed into dense and marshy woodland about 40 kilometres north east of Ivory Coast's economic capital early Saturday.

Investigators from Varig were flying to Abidjan, where airport officials said rescue teams were still searching for the plane's flight recorders.

They said the search would probably be a lengthy one since some of the debris had sunk deep into the marshy land.

Minutes before the plane smashed into the ground and disintegrated as it carved a trail several hundred metres long through the trees, the captain had reported engine trouble and said he was returning to Abidjan.

French troops, hacking their way to the crash site with machetes, found badly charred

and grotesquely twisted bodies among the smouldering debris scattered over a large area.

But two men, one Ivorian schoolteacher and an as yet unidentified white man, were discovered alive in the tail.

Reports of his nationality varied, some describing him as a Lebanese or a Brazilian of Lebanese stock while others said he was a Briton who had flown in from Monrovia on his way to Brazil.

The dead included an American, a German couple and a Briton, according to the airline's office in Rio de Janeiro. The other victims were from Africa and South America.

Varig identified the American only as L. Cleveland, without providing a hometown, and an airline official said he did not know whether the couple was from East Germany or West Germany.

Soldiers who sealed off the area said the four-engine jetliner crashed about 300 metres from the small La Me River, which rescuers had to cross in knee-deep mud, near the village of Grand Alope.

The French news agency Agence France-Presse said the pilot's last message was that he was circling to dump excess fuel before coming back to land.

When contact was lost, the control tower called for help from French marines stationed near the airport under military aid agreements. Two units headed for the crash area on dirt roads and by foot.

The Ivorian was conscious when found and told rescuers: "I am in too much pain. I will talk later." He was rushed to an Abidjan hospital and was reported on Sunday to be out of danger. Hospital sources described the other survivor's condition as serious and could not say if he would pull through.

Varig and diplomats from countries concerned declined to give a full casualty list until all next of kin had been informed.

In Rio de Janeiro, later Sunday Varig released a list of passengers on the plane.

Forty-nine of the 51 passengers and crew died. Varig identified the survivors as A. Wanse, a British citizen, and Yessou Neuba, from Ivory Coast.

British Council awards certificates to royal scholarship recipients

AMMAN (J.T.) — The British Council representative in Amman, Mr. David Latta, presented certificates Sunday for the "King Hussein of Jordan Scholarships" to three past Jordanian recipients of the scholarship. The recipients were Ramzi Shaaban, his sister Randa, and Mr. Yazid Sharaha. The certificates bore His Majesty King Hussein's signature, and those of the chairman of the Davies' Educational Trust Ltd. and the principal of the Davies' Educational College in the United Kingdom.

The King Hussein of Jordan Scholarships are donated by the Davies' Educational Trust annually to an outstanding academic student with a "promising future"; it is for one year only. Studies during this year stand for the normal "A" level requirement of British University. This year's recipient of the

scholarship is Miss Yasmin Saudi, whose tawjihi average was 98 per cent, and who is now studying theoretical physics. Miss Saudi has already applied to five universities in the United Kingdom, including Cambridge, and they all have accepted her applications.

Arab detainees in Israeli jails estimated at 8,450

AMMAN (Petra) — A report issued by the Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs estimates the number of Arab detainees in Israeli jails at 8,450, who, it says, are undergoing constant torture and are deprived of basic human necessities.

The report said that the Israeli authorities have established 19 prisons for the Arab population in towns and cities of the Palestinian land, occupied since 1948, all of which have cells for solitary confinement and quarters for conducting torture.

These jails are cramped with Arab detainees whose health conditions continue to deteriorate due to lack of proper medical attention and the "starving policy" practised against them by the prison authorities, the report said. It added that Arab detainees are suffering from anaemia and skin diseases among others, and their diet does not include the minimum calories required for the human body which is 2,500 a day. The prison authorities deprive the Arab detainees of the right to listen to Arab broadcasts,

NEWS IN BRIEF

Committee to discuss health in occupied areas

AMMAN (J.T.) — The joint committee for health services in the occupied West Bank will hold a meeting on Jan. 7 to discuss a number of health issues related to Arab citizens in the occupied Arab territories, according to an article published Sunday in Sawt Al Shaab newspaper. The eight-member committee is chaired by Dr. Muwafiq Al Fawaz.

JMC to change medical exam schedule

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Medical Council (JMC) is expected to issue a decision during the next few weeks, according to which the council's exams for medical specialisations will be held once a year, instead of twice, according to a report published on Sunday in the local Arabic daily Sawt Al Shaab newspaper.

Ministry to attend world sports meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Youth will take part in the meetings of the executive bureau and general assembly of the International Sports Federation, scheduled to be held in Spain on Jan. 17. The meetings will last for six days.

Man sentenced for hashish trafficking

AMMAN (Petra) — The military court has sentenced Salim Salameh Al Aheiwat to seven years imprisonment and fined him JD 700 for trafficking hashish. The general military governor endorsed the sentence.

Teachers receive military training

MAFRAQ (Petra) — A group of teachers employed by the Mafraq Industrial School graduated here Sunday after obtaining military training as recruits of the People's Army. The first batch, comprising 32 graduates, had civil defence and first aid training in addition to training in the use of light arms. The graduation ceremony was attended by Mafraq Governor Fayez Abbadi, the governorate's police director, the military commander of Mafraq, and directors of government departments in the governorate.

Scottish group visits Jordan University

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation from Glasgow University in the United Kingdom Sunday called at the University of Jordan and met with its president, Dr. Abdul Salam Al Majali. The delegation, led by professor David Sharp, discussed with the president cooperation between the two universities in implementation of a three-year agreement signed earlier between the two sides.

covering scientific and cultural affairs. Under the agreement both universities undertake to cooperate in research work in medical and health fields. Dr. Marwan Kamal, the university's vice president, attended the meeting. Later the delegation met with deans of various departments and discussed bilateral cooperation.

Reagan enters hospital

(Continued from page 1)

comes at a time when he is trying to emerge from the shadow of a two-month-old political crisis caused by disclosure of the secret sale of American arms to Iran and the diversion of profits to U.S.-backed Nicaraguan rebels, or contras.

The crisis has caused his public approval rating, which in early November was the highest such rating for a U.S. leader in a generation, to drop more than 20 percentage points.

David Abshire, the former U.S. ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), takes over White House efforts on Monday to dampen the furor over the Iran arms scandal in his new role as a special presidential adviser.

Mr. Reagan is also about to face a Congress totally dominated by the Democratic opponents for the first time since he took office in 1981.

In his weekly radio address, Mr. Reagan on Saturday warned the new congress against tampering with his \$1.02 trillion budget for 1988, which will be sent to Capitol Hill on Monday.

"You can't have it both ways. You can't deny (federal budget) deficits and then pass budget-busting legislation," he said.

Congress begins its 100th two-year session on Tuesday and is expected, as in previous years, to make deep cuts in the president's budget — particularly on defence spending — in an effort to reduce the federal budget deficit.

Administration officials say the budget for the 1988 fiscal year beginning Oct. 1 will call for about \$1.02 trillion in federal spending, more than has ever been sought by any president.

Mr. Reagan also made a pitch for what is expected to be a \$312-billion defence budget and criticised Congress for what he called a "dangerous slide" in military spending over the past two years.

"For the last two years defence spending even after inflation has dropped even while our adversaries spend more," he said. "To let this decline continue would endanger every family in America and world peace as well."

Kuwait finds support for efforts

(Continued from page 1)

news agency IRNA said First Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Mohammad Besarati left Tehran for Damascus on Sunday for talks with Syrian officials on the summit and other issues.

Support by Syria, as a close ally of Tehran, is seen by diplomats to be vital to steps to revive a pan-Islamic initiative designed to secure a peaceful end to the Iran-Iraq war, now in its seventh year.

A nine-member committee set up by the 46-nation Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) in 1981 met several weeks ago to reactivate the peace drive, after it had lapsed 15 months earlier.

Tehran has repeatedly rejected any mediation, and vowed to keep fighting until the Baghdad government is overthrown.

Iran, which has often criticised Kuwait for political, financial and logistical aid to Baghdad during the war, recently criticised the decision to stage the summit in the emirate, saying it should be held at a "neutral" venue.

In Tehran, Kayhan newspaper quoted Prime Minister Mir-Hossein Mousavi as saying Iran would prefer the summit to be held in Pakistan.

The OIC peace committee is expected to report to the summit. The emir meanwhile received Moroccan Foreign Minister Abdul Latif Filali, who conveyed a special message from King Hassan who hosted the last Islamic summit in Casablanca in 1984.

The envoy's trip came after three Moroccan newspapers, two of them pro-government, this week urged a postponement of the summit because of existing Arab and Islamic rifts.

"The situation being what it is, it would be more profitable for Islamic countries to start ironing out major differences..." Al Maghrib, organ of Morocco's governing National Assembly of Independents party, said Sunday.

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Queen patronises nursing, midwifery school graduation

AMMAN (Petra) — A group of 131 nurses and midwives graduated Sunday at a ceremony held at the Al Hussein Youth City in Amman under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor.

The Queen heard speeches delivered on the occasion and distributed diplomas to the graduates who completed courses at nursing institutes located in Amman, Irbid and Zarqa.

At the outset of the ceremony, Health Minister Zaid Hamzeh made a speech outlining the development of nursing education and training in the Kingdom. The first institute, the Jordan College of Nursing, was established in Amman in 1953; the number of such institutes has now reached six, three run by the Ministry of Health, in Amman, Zarqa and Irbid, and three others owned and operated by the Armed Forces Royal Medical Services, the University of Jordan, and the University of Science and Technology, the minister said.

The past few years have witnessed more and more of a tendency among Jordanian females to join the nursing profession, the minister pointed out. He said that the ministry plans to establish more nursing colleges within the five-year plan, and will also set up an institute for training nursing instructors.

The minister noted that the country still lacks sufficient numbers of professional nurses

and midwives who, he said, are required to meet the ministry's plans for opening more child care centres and integrated health centres in Jordan.

Director of the Irbid Nursing College Mrs. Slama Shuqair made a speech in which she welcomed Queen Noor, and outlined the development of the nursing profession in the Kingdom. She also paid tribute to the Ministry of

Health which, she said, has offered incentives to encourage students to join the profession and serve their society.

One of the graduates made a speech thanking the Queen for patronising the ceremony and said that the graduates were looking forward to exert all possible efforts to serve the country. The wife of the prime minister, Director of the Public Security Lt.-Gen. Abdul Hadi Al Majali, Director of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation Mrs. In'am Al Mufti, and other senior officials and members of the diplomatic corps in Jordan were among those attending the graduation ceremony.



Her Majesty Queen Noor presents diplomas to nursing and midwifery graduates at the Al Hussein Youth City in Amman on Sunday.

Girl child turns into boy

CENTRAL JORDAN VALLEY (J.T.) — A little female child named Amina Al Shatti has recently been transformed into male and assumed the name of Amin, according to a report in Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily. The report said that the transformation occurred naturally and without a surgical operation on the two-year old child.

The paper quoted the child's father Adel Shatti who is a farmer as saying that his child displayed signs of being female and male at the same time, but with more

female signs upon birth late in 1984. But a few months later the child's male organs began to make themselves more visible which prompted the child's parents to seek medical advice, the report said.

It said that the doctors at the health centre near Deir Alla, where the parents live, said that the child was male and an operation was needed for the transformation. But Mr. Shatti was quoted as saying that no operation was required and the transformation happened naturally.

Chemists to open seminar

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian Chemists Association (JCA) will open its third seminar under the title of "Chemistry and the Society" next Saturday; the participants will discuss a number of working papers dealing with the employment of laser beams in the treatment of eye ailments and wastewater exhausted from power stations.

The two-day JCA seminar will be opened by Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hisham Al Khatib.

No let-up in Amal-Palestinian battles

(Continued from page 1) Lebanon to its request last month to go to Damascus and Beirut to try to arrange a ceasefire.

It added that the committee had "agreed on the manner in which it plans future action in order to apply Arab League resolutions," which called for a "camps war" truce at last month's emergency meeting.

It gave no further details and set no date, but Arab League foreign ministers agreed at last month's session to meet in Tunis again on Jan. 14 to review the situation in Lebanon.

The diplomatic sources said the committee would seek to go to Syria and Lebanon before that date, or the new foreign ministers meeting could be postponed.

Lebanon originally opposed the creation of the Arab League

committee because it contends the "camps war" is an internal affair. Only three foreign ministers of the committee — from Algeria, Mauritania and Jordan — attended Saturday's meeting.

Kuwait and Tunisia were represented by a minister of state and secretary of state at the Foreign Ministry respectively, and the United Arab Emirates and North Yemen by their permanent representatives to the 21-member Arab League.

Amal pounded the Shatila and Bourj Al Barajneh Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut with tank and artillery fire Sunday. Palestinians first lobbed mortar shells and hurled hand grenades into surrounding Shi'ite residential districts, police said.

Palestinian gunners based in the central Lebanese mountains intervened at mid-afternoon to

hammer Beirut's southern Shi'ite suburbs with long-range artillery in an apparent effort to ease Amal's bombardment of the two beleaguered shantytowns.

Thunderous shell blasts echoed through the Lebanese capital of Beirut along with the wail of ambulance sirens.

Police said four people were killed and 17 wounded from both sides in the new flareup. A hull had prevailed since new year's eve last Wednesday.

The latest Beirut casualties topped to 536 killed and 1,386 wounded the known toll of the current round of fighting that erupted Nov. 24.

More than 1,600 people have been killed and 3,600 wounded by police count since the Amal-Palestinian war for control of the camps broke out in May 1985.

Hawke offers limited Australian role

(Continued from page 1)

West Bank and Gaza but plans have not been finalised. — Australia does not object to visit to the country by Palestinian leaders but "the criterion that the government pursues is whether a person has had an active involvement with or been advocate of terrorism."

Asked whether the government's criterion ruled out a visit by Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat, Mr. Hawke said: "Well, it does, and on that broader point, we have refused to recognise the PLO while it maintains its denial of Israel's right to exist. The interests of the Palestinian people as well as the people of Israel cannot be advanced or protected while there is that denial."

Replying to another question, Mr. Hawke agreed that settling the Middle East conflict — the Arab-Israeli problem, the six-year-old Iran-Iraq war and the civil strife in Lebanon — was central to world peace and security, and said the apparent apathy among Australians towards the problems was the result of a "reasonably natural tendency for people not to take a great deal of interest in, or become concerned with, issues which they do not see as immediately affecting their interests or welfare."

However, he said, "as a number of points around the world there are possible flashpoints which could generate a larger conflict, and so Australians should have a real interest in trying to ensure that as far as possible these potential flashpoints are

dampened down."

On secret American arms sales to Iran which have kicked up a major controversy within the U.S., the Middle East and elsewhere, Mr. Hawke said "there is absolutely no question that the revelations of what has happened have diminished the authority of the United States at this time... in the region and also to some extent in its relations to the countries of Western Europe." However, he said, the belief that "it's very rarely that completely permanent damage is done by the action of a country."

"I welcome the fact that U.S. President Ronald Reagan has initiated the processes of a full investigation and I trust that they will be carried through rigorously and expeditiously."

On Lebanon, the prime minister said "the situation is arguably the most tragic anywhere in the world... you have the international conflict, which in a sense are indigenous... between Christians and Muslims, and between factions within the Christian and Muslim communities."

"The second factor is that factors external to Lebanon have included their rivalries into Lebanon... the loss of life in Lebanon is just truly staggering and it leads you to be rather pessimistic... Australia's position is that there should be no foreign forces in Lebanon other than those that are there at the express request of the government of Lebanon."

In reply to a question on Israeli raids against Palestinian camps in

Lebanon, Mr. Hawke indicated he found some justifications for the Israeli action. He said although Australia did not approve of such attacks "one of the great problems in this situation is that the camps are used as headquarters or gathering places, points of significance for various terrorist groups. And there is no doubt that those forces themselves have been prepared to use the refugee camps as sort of pawns in their own gruesome and awesome conflict."

During his visit to Jordan, Mr. Hawke is expected to be received by His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan for a review of the Middle East situation and what possible contribution Australia could make towards achieving peace in the region. In addition, bilateral relations and cooperation in trade and economy are also expected to be discussed.

Prominent among the topics for the Australian premier's talks in Amman is possible cooperation between a Queensland company and the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company in processing phosphates and related products.

Mr. Hawke leaves Jordan on Jan. 25 for Israel for a two-day visit. After talks with Israeli leaders, the premier will leave for Europe to attend an international seminar and will return to Egypt two days later for meetings with President Hosni Mubarak and other Egyptian leaders. Mr. Hawke's talks with Israel and Egypt are also expected to cover issues related to the Multinational Observers Force in the Sinai which Australia has contributed soldiers at American behest.

Australian journal focuses on the Middle East

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Australian Focus on the Middle East, a newly-introduced magazine which, as its theme may suggest, is a mirror reflecting the latest developments in the Middle East to the Australian readers, will be on newsstands on Jan. 6.

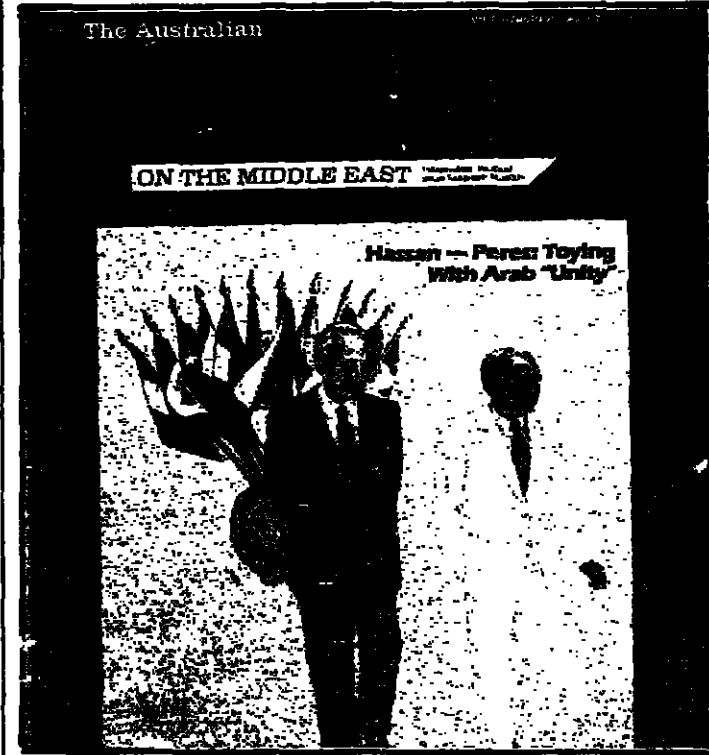
The 52-page illustrated magazine, a joint venture by a group of Arab scholars, can best be termed a "built-in" media supply for Australia of the real version of the Middle East developments.

A diversified variety of light and political news, ranging from articles probing into the economic situation and political blunders in the Middle East to topics referring to Israel's patching up of its policy towards East Asia, decorates the

magazine's zero issue, which was published in Sydney last September.

Thumbing through the well-designed magazine, one can get in touch with the details of various bewildering issues on the Middle East. In addition, the informative editorials shed light on dimensions unknown to most of the Australian leaders — detailed analysis of the Middle East problem since its inception.

In the zero issue introduction, the magazine's publisher and editor-in-chief, Fernando Francis, wrote the following: "We do not belong to any party as we are backed by no-one except scholars dedicated to the cause of saving the world by concentrating on the crux of the matter — the Middle East." And so it should be — Fernando is a former advertisement manager of the Jordan Times newspaper.



Volume 1, Zero issue of the newly-issued magazine entitled "The Australian Focus on the Middle East: An Independent, Political, Socio-Economic Monthly."

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Jordan Times

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One breakthrough

AS THE special committee of Arab foreign ministers, formed to end the "camps war," met again in Tunis in another bid to accomplish the task entrusted to it by the Arab League, there were faint signs that there could be a let up in the fighting between brothers in Lebanon. The first signal came from the beleaguered Palestinian refugee camp of Rashidiyah in South Lebanon where a convoy of trucks loaded with emergency supplies was allowed to drive into that camp on Saturday. That positive development in the conflict came in the wake of the call by Amal chief Nabih Berri six days ago for a new ceasefire and an end to the bloody "war of the camps." Perhaps now the committee of seven foreign ministers composed of the foreign ministers of Jordan, Tunisia, Kuwait, Mauritania, the United Arab Emirates, North Yemen and Algeria, in addition to Arab League Secretary-General Chadi Klibi, could build on that positive foundation and move forward to address the heart of the armed conflict. This follow-up action by the seven cannot be successful without visiting Lebanon, the scene of the fighting, and Syria, which has a peace-keeping force under the umbrella of the Arab League. Fortunately Lebanon and Syria have positively responded to the seven's request to visit the two countries.

It would have been a major setback to Arab solidarity if the two countries had taken a negative stance on the Arab League action. After all, a visit by Arab foreign ministers should be always welcomed by all Arab capitals, whatever and no matter what the reservation that Arab governments may have on such visits.

Such visits, when realised, could afford Damascus as well as Beirut opportunities to put forward their respective views on the conflict. Also such visits could afford the committee of seven an occasion to acquaint itself with the realities of the conflict by receiving the leaderships of the two fighting factions in a private forum either separately or jointly and deliberating with them on the best means to end the fighting. The refugee camps themselves need to be visited and examined in order for the seven to be better acquainted with the situation inside and outside the camps.

The indication made by Syria and Lebanon that they would receive the committee is a breakthrough in the direction of according the Arab foreign ministers real opportunities to accomplish their task. It is, however, regrettable that Lebanese President Amin Gemayel still maintains that the "camps war" constitutes an internal matter. From an international point of view such a position is untenable as such kind of conflicts fall also under international jurisdiction. And if there are strong arguments in favour of an international jurisdiction, a priori, an Arab jurisdiction is all the more acceptable, if not outright compulsory.

We welcome the persistence of the Arab League in its pursuit of its mandate to put an end to this inter-Arab fighting and call on all the Arab official community to support this Arab action.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: Israel raises its head again

ISRAEL'S arbitrary measures in the occupied Arab territories presented themselves once again with a decision by the occupation authorities to close down Al Najah University in Nablus on the West Bank for a whole week. The Israelis say they did that because they were afraid of a renewed outbreak of violence and anti-Israeli demonstrations. At the same time the Israelis have also announced they are confiscating more Arab land in the Hebron region and around Arab Jerusalem in a clear display of total disregard to Arab rights and in a bid to force the Arabs to abandon their homeland. The Israeli measures have not drawn any condemnation yet by those who claim to be fighting terrorism and opposed to inhuman actions. It goes without saying that condoning Israel's illegal measures is a gesture of encouragement for the Zionists to pursue their repressive measures against the Palestinian people. As the Israeli measures continue and Israeli means of terror spread in the occupied Arab land, the Arab people are subjected to humiliation and intimidation, and are not allowed to rise in protest or carry out any resistance activity. The Israelis get away with their actions and get what they want as the Arabs are faced with more suffering and more deprivation and displacement. Israel's crimes against Arab universities and Arab economic institutions should make the Arab countries realise that struggle is the only means for deterring Israel's terrorism, and that only through an intrinsic Arab force can the usurped territories be regained.

Al Dustour: Copts take a firm stand

THE Coptic bishop of Egypt has raised Egypt's national voice by announcing measures in support of the Arab rights in Jerusalem. He declared that Egyptian Christian pilgrims should not pay a visit to the holy places in the Holy City as long as it remains under Israeli rule. He said that the Copts of Egypt will not enter Jerusalem except in the company of their Muslim Brothers when the city is liberated from Israeli rule. It should be noted also that the Copts did not succumb to Israeli pressure when Tel Aviv threatened to confiscate Deir Al Sultan Convent which was actually turned over to the Ethiopian church in Jerusalem. This convent was Egyptian property and the Israelis made it a point of seizing it for the sake of putting pressure on the Copts who refused to negotiate with the occupation authorities over their rights. This Coptic stand, coupled with that of the Vatican in Rome, with regard to the Arab land and the holy places there point to an all-out solid Christian attitude towards the Middle East situation and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israel, which has successfully won support of some of the western churches, is now confronted with a solid stand that opposes occupation and invasion. The Coptic stand is bound to tighten the siege around Israel and drive it into further isolation.

Sawt Al Shaab: Speedy action is needed

AS THE "camps war" continues unabated in Lebanon, the seven-member Arab ministerial committee has opened meetings in Tunis to find a way of ending the conflict and end the bloodshed. Over the past two months, intensified efforts were made for ending the attacks on the Palestinian camps, and the new sufferings of the Palestinian people but the Shiite Amal movement has been maintaining its shelling of innocent civilians and destroying the homes of the displaced refugees, denying them any food or medical supplies. This tragic situation should prompt the Arab League and the seven-member committee to take speedy action and to move quickly to halt the fighting and to save thousands of innocent people from death. We are heartened by an announcement that President Gemayel of Lebanon has accepted mediation for discussing the Palestinian camps issue in detail and for finding a lasting solution for the problem. We are also encouraged by Arab efforts through the Arab League and the seven-member committee to end the tragedy of the refugees in Lebanon.

We need better organised consumer protection

By Dr. Walid Sa'di

WITH the reintroduction of the law making it compulsory once again to use safety belts while driving a motor vehicle, Jordan has demonstrated once again that it is keeping an eye open on how to protect its inhabitants from unnecessary dangers. One still does not know why that law was lifted in the first place and is still puzzled why its application is made restrictive to zoning areas where speed over 60 kilometres an hour is allowed. I know of no country which incorporated the safety belts rule that waived its use where speeding limit is less than 60 kilometres. And I doubt very much if our statistics on the usefulness of safety belts are any different from the findings of other nations which had pioneered the compulsory use of safety belts much earlier than we did. But be that as it may, still by reintroducing the compulsory use of safety belts, Jordan is proceeding in the right direction and nothing better can we begin the new year with than by demonstrating that our internal issues are also as important and pressing, albeit not as critical, as our external challenges and conflicts.

Developing countries are by and large overwhelmed by their external issues and problems that they tend to gloss over their internal affairs. Public weal in real terms is seldom on the top of the list of priorities of developing countries. The lion's share of the national budgets goes for external causes and whatever is earmarked for domestic concerns tend to be meagre in relative terms. And as they grow stronger externally they concurrently grow weaker from the inside. This lopsided and unbalanced approach to the allocation of expenditures and interest keeps most developing countries off balance and essentially unstable and vulnerable. In effect they eventually undermine even their external strength to the extent that they ignore their domestic concerns.

Fortunately Jordan has made effective strides in the direction of protecting and promoting its domestic issues. And although we have registered major gains and progress on many domestic fronts and levels, naturally there are still some areas which await addressing and resolution. The list of the neglected subjects on the internal scene could be indeed long but this is not the place or time to enumerate them at length. Suffice to mention now one particular issue which is uppermost on the minds of most of us. The beginning of the new year in addition to the symbolic significance of reintroducing the safety

belt rule is indeed a propitious time to name that particular domestic malady and it is no other than the issue of consumer protection.

Consumer protection is commonly a feature of developed countries. Seldom that one hears of a developing country which accords this subject more than a lip service. Developing countries should be in fact hardpressed to act along these lines especially in view of the fact that they have become dumping grounds for unwanted and unsafe products. Sub-standard products of the industrial world are flooding the markets of these countries where the unprotected and unsuspecting consumer is attracted by the cheaper prices of the unsafe and sub-standard goods and keeps on buying them. For example, developing countries keep on using pesticides in agricultural production when the use of such chemicals is prohibited in the very countries which manufacture them. In the process, the people of the developing countries pollute and damage their bodies and environment in a gradual but sure manner. It has not dawned yet on many developing countries that health and safety considerations have an economic cost as well and that it is no longer a luxury to keep environmental and health considerations in perspective.

Few of such countries understand and appreciate the proven and substantiated proposition that no price tag is high enough to stop us from doing something effective in the general environmental and consumer protection. In some areas, we the developing countries have been used as experimental grounds for untested goods. Our people have literally been used as guinea pigs to test the shortcomings or side effects of certain products which the industrial world manufactures for material gains. What governmental agencies do we have in Jordan to protect our consumers from such unsafe products whether they are of the edible kind or the mechanical sort? I sometimes wonder whether even the equipments that we use at our airports to detect weapons and dangerous items are in fact up-to-the-standard and whether the radiation level released by them is safe by international standards. Shouldn't we have by now an agency which enjoys a mandate broad enough to address such concerns and anxieties.

Even on the local scene, how much control do we have in Jordan

over our domestic manufactured goods to make sure that our consumer, whether indigenous or foreign, is protected from abuse. The milk we drink and all the dairy products that we consume, are they up to standard at all times and subject to continuous inspection? Even the bread we eat and the water we drink and the restaurant that we frequent all need some kind of effective control and inspection. One can go on and on listing the areas which could benefit from a coordinated and synchronised control and inspection. But the answer would remain the same over and over again whenever we can come up with a subject hitherto unaddressed and it is no other than the urgent and pressing need for an agency for consumer protection.

We need not be nostalgic about Ralf Nader, who pioneered the interest in consumer protection in the U.S. a couple of generations ago. Those of us who are old enough to remember his activities in the sixties recollect vividly that him and his movement were initially subjected to all sorts of absurd harassments by the big companies to the extent that he was accused of having been a communist. Well that was some 20 years ago and the world has changed a lot since then. Consumer protection had since gained respectability and worldwide support, especially in the industrial world. What is urgently needed now is to have the developing world complement the actions of the sophisticated world by introducing to their midst mechanisms which can do similar tasks.

I think that Jordan could assume a leadership role in this context. We have amply demonstrated already that we are conscious of the need to protect our consumers in more than one domain. The campaign against smoking, especially in public places, and the reintroduction of the safety belt rule are clear signals that we wish to move on in the direction of protecting our citizens and visitors from the whims of the greedy and unconcerned. The beginning of this year could serve as an opportune time to complete the road in the direction of consumer protection by creating an agency be it inter-governmental or private-public agency for this very purpose. The health and safety of our inhabitants need not wait much longer for adequate and effective protection. There is much to be done in this domain and the time to commence our collective and individual actions is now.

Democracy on trial in Mauritania after two decades

By Christiane Saure

Reuter

NOUAKCHOTT — Citizens of Mauritania's 13 main cities and towns had their first opportunity in December to vote since their desperately poor desert nation became independent from France 26 years ago.

The specifics of campaign debate were carefully limited to local issues, like schools and buses.

And to bar any open emergence of national political parties, candidates were forbidden to ally themselves with like-minded contenders in other towns.

But the polling marked a cautious step towards democracy in a country where slavery was in the recent past an entrenched feature of social and economic life.

The country's problems included the devastating effects of drought, which turned many nomad herdsmen into urban squatters, and the plight of former slaves left homeless, jobless and virtually hopeless by the abolition of the system under which they were born.

There is also racial tension between the Moors, a mainly light-skinned people who regard themselves and the country as part of the Arab World, and blacks, some of whom feel discriminated against and resent the displacement of French by Arabic as the main language of schooling and government.

A dramatic fall in world prices for iron ore, Mauritania's main export, has compounded the economic woes.

Nouakchott, a new capital built 25 years ago for 30,000 people, now has a population of 500,000, with thousands of families scraping a living in squalid shantytowns.

Mauritania was ruled by a rigid one-party system during its first 18 years of independence and by authoritarian military officers until 1984.

The present rulers, a military council led by Colonel Maouya Ould Sid'Ahmad Taya, is widely praised for respecting human rights.

By contrast, former President Mohammed Khouna Ould Haidera is said by critics to have carried out widespread arrests in a ruthless suppression of his opponents.

In October last year, there were

outbreaks of racial violence in Nouakchott and the port city of Nouadhibou, with a clandestine black opposition movement, the African Liberation Forces of Mauritania (FLAM), denouncing what it said was racial discrimination.

FLAM also claims that blacks now are a majority among Mauritania's estimated 1.7 million people. The last census, in 1977, put them at only 17 per cent.

Interior Minister Colonel Djibril Ould Abdoulaye told Reuters in December that in the October disturbances, a "small group of left-wing intellectuals seeking government posts had unsuccessfully tried to destabilise the government."

Government officials point out that black Mauritians hold senior positions on the ruling military council as well as in the administration and security forces.

Col Abdoulaye said Arabic was the country's main traditional language and was also the language of Islam, a religion Mauritians have in common.

In addition, Mauritania belongs to the Arab League and under President Taya established good relations with all its Arab neighbours, including Morocco.

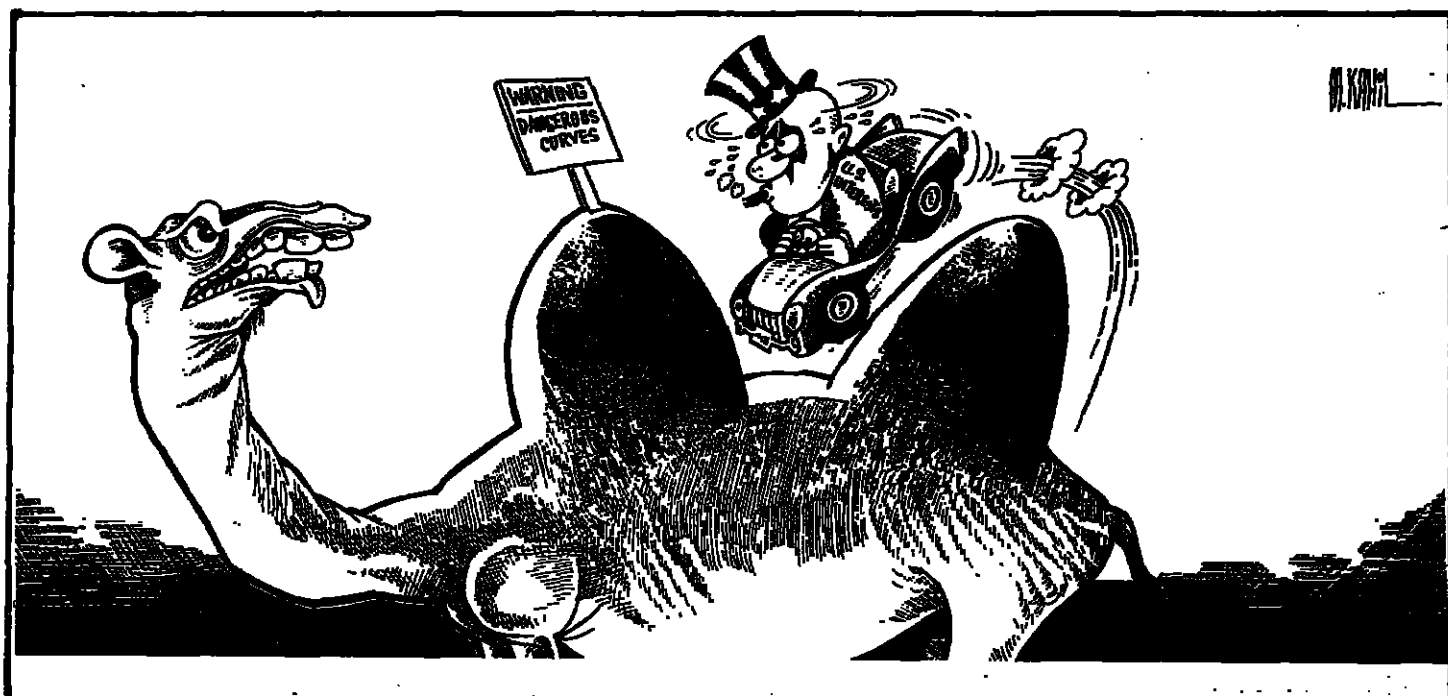
One of Taya's first moves on assuming power was to declare neutrality on the Western Sahara, ending Mauritania's active support for the Polisario Front fighting Morocco for control of the territory.

In last month's municipal elections, political observers in Nouakchott regarded even the limited alliances permitted the candidates — a maximum of four candidates joining together to form a local "list" — as embryonic political parties, and saw the process as the beginning of a wider democratisation.

Elements of various political and Islamic groups repressed under the previous harsh rule of Colonel Ould Haidera reemerged in support of different lists, they said.

It is not yet clear how far Taya wants to take the democratic opening and one of his advisers told Reuters Mauritania needs to develop its education first.

But during the voting, even the makeshift dwelling of Nouakchott squatters sported political flags, demonstrating a wide enthusiasm for the experiment.



Student protests in Peking bring out new tolerance in handling dissent

By Mark O'Neill

Reuter

PEKING — The handling of two illegal protests in the heart of Peking shows a new official tolerance towards dissent, but only because students have not tried to mobilise mass unrest. Western diplomats and Chinese officials say.

The protests, on Thursday and early Friday, were held in defiance of regulations banning demonstrations in historic Tiananmen Square, and despite a barrage of media messages urging students to stay off the streets.

Students marched 15 kilometres on Friday from Peking University to the square, where a large number of police allowed them to march, sit and shout slogans for freedom and democracy before they dispersed just before dawn.

"The significance of these and other campus protests over the last month is that the authorities allowed them to occur," one Western diplomat said. "Such widespread spontaneous student protest is unprecedented in Communist China."

He added: "Seven years of reforms and the open-door policy have made China more open than it used to be. Also the demands of the students have mostly been in support of official policies, but

asking that they be implemented more quickly."

Another diplomat said the authorities on Thursday succeeded in their main objective — preventing a huge rally involving thousands of other people as well as students, such as happened in Shanghai on Dec. 20 and 21.

Students calling for more freedom and democracy led tens of thousands of people, blocking the centre of Shanghai, in the biggest rally seen in China for years.

"The police in Peking allowed the illegal protests to prevent such a rally. The numbers were small. Confrontation might have made it bigger. What was politic prevailed over what was legal," the diplomat added.

He said national police tactics had been consistent through the protests: no clubs or batons, avoid force and confrontation and contain the scope of dissent.

"Students are a special class in China. They have a freedom granted to no-one else and the party wants to keep their loyalty. Many Communist Party leaders cut their teeth in student activism," he added.

The official press, while urging students not to take to the streets, has been restrained in criticising them but has hit out at "a small number of anti-socialist troublemakers" whom it blames for inciting students.

None of at least nine people arrested so far in connection with the unrest is a student.

One, Shanghai factory worker, was shown on national television news Thursday night. He is accused of setting up an illegal political party aimed at overthrowing the Communists and inciting students to join it.

"The protests show that the party is for the first time prepared to allow a limited amount of public dissent and demonstrations," the diplomat said.

A Peking schoolteacher said the public at large had not rallied to the students' demands because they were too abstract and hard for ordinary people to understand.

"For workers, the key issues are rising prices, wage levels and the likelihood of higher rents, about which there is discontent."

"Democracy? There is no tradition and understanding of it in China. There is a huge educational gap between students and workers, not to mention 800 million farmers. There will be no opposition party in the foreseeable future," he said.

A Chinese propaganda official said the students had been too intelligent to use wages and prices as their rallying cries. "These are too sensitive," she said with a smile.

She said the cultural level of most Chinese was too low for a Western-style democracy.

"Rural people are family-oriented and would vote on clan lines. And everyone would run for office — who doesn't want to be an official with all the privileges that brings?" she said.

A major weapon in the official propaganda war against the protest is the spectre of the cultural revolution of 1966-76, which began with student activism and led to national economic and social disaster.

Peking Television interviewed on Thursday a famous actress who said she had been uneasy over the last few weeks for fear the cultural revolution would re-occur.

"Many people in my profession killed themselves during that period. Only since 1978 have we been able to develop ourselves. Please, students, study hard and make the best use of the precious opportunity you have," she said.

The teacher said this was an effective weapon for the media to use. "Everyone fears another cultural revolution. What workers want is peace and stability and rising living standards. No-one wants disorder and confusion."

One of the diplomats said students and the government were testing each other to see the extent of

Singer who hymns human side of Lebanon and the Middle East

Andrew Gowers, of the Financial Times of London, reports on a star whose voice knows no boundaries

PARLIAMENT SQUARE on a bracing December evening: a dark-eyed, spectral figure sings Christmas carols in a church; the strife-torn streets of Beirut and the scorched passions of the Middle East seem part of another world.

Yet the singer is mellow-voiced Fairuz from the Lebanon; by far the most popular musical star in the Middle East. She has been in London last week for two unusual concerts incorporating an odd and slightly uncomfortable mixture of Arabic, Syrian and English carols — together with a negro spiritual and even an Arabic version of "Jingle Bells." Although she has performed in Britain before — notably at a packed Festival Hall earlier this year — it was the first time she had sung in English and the first time she had sung in a

church outside Lebanon.

Fairuz has a problem, of which her London performances are a vivid illustration. Wherever she performs — from Boston to Baghdad — she attracts capacity audiences and adulation. She has been feted by kings and presidents. Her stature is sometimes compared with that of Umm Kalthoum, the legendary late Egyptian singer who used to send audiences into a frenzy with her lengthy and hypnotic performances — although Fairuz herself resists attempts to bracket her music with that of other Middle Eastern singers, saying that it has absorbed a bewildering variety of influences including Indian and Western.

But for all the honour which she evidently receives in her homeland, its deep and violent divisions mean that she cannot and will not perform there.

Until four years ago Fairuz — a



Fairuz

striking woman dressed always in black, and with red hair and a pallid and astonishingly slender face — used to sing Easter songs every Good Friday on the roof of the church in her home village,

Antelias, outside Beirut. Crowds — both Christian and Muslim — flocked from all over the Lebanon to hear her. But the succession of wars, and the subsequent cantonisation of the country, have deprived such gestures of meaning. As a result, Fairuz — although she lives most of the time in Beirut — has resolved not to sing in the country until it is united again.

"I didn't want to sing in just one place with just one group of people," she said through an interpreter this week. The London Christmas concerts are an attempt both to slough off the sadness of Good Friday and to escape from the tragedy of the Lebanon. Fairuz is also gearing up for a U.S. tour in the first half of next year as well as performances in Muscat and Dubai.

Any escape, however, is bound to be brief and sporadic. Associates say her orchestra is

geographically scattered and difficult to assemble. At this week's performances there was an evocative sadness in her low voice as it swooped around the lush-sounding Western orchestra and embellished the Western scale. Her encore, typically, was entitled "Beirut" and greeted with wild cheers and whistles from her compatriots in the congregation, which also included Westerners and a smattering of other Arabs.

Fittingly — though not, she says, symbolically — Fairuz, a Christian, has two houses in Beirut, one in the Muslim East and one in the Muslim West. Friends say she is probably the only person in the Lebanon who has no problem crossing the heavily-fortified and hostile barricades which scar the city. "For her there are no boundaries," says one. "People greet her at every barrier as if she were one of theirs."

Yet Fairuz, who shuns publicity but clearly shows a keen sense of the theatrical in her concerts, is extremely wary of suggestions that her influence might give her a political role — either in the dangerous politics of her country or in those of the Middle East as a whole. Speaking animatedly in Arabic, she is given to sententious utterances like "beauty has no boundaries." Her interpreter explains: "She prefers to sing about the human side of the Lebanon, the things that bring people together. It's not political but it's very patriotic."

And despite her forays outside the Middle East, she seems genuinely uninterested in developing the same kind of devoted following among Westerners. Asked whether it was conceivable that she might ever become popular in the West as she is in the Arab world, she says simply: "I don't think about it."

Gurkha warriors — glorious past and a bleak future

The Gurkhas who serve the British army have had a mixed recent past: glorious service in the Falklands tarnished with drug smuggling. David Dodwell looks at the future of "the most loyal of the loyal."

HONG KONG — Prince Philip recently bade farewell to one of Hong Kong's four Gurkha regiments due to be disbanded in January, as a question mark hung over the fate of a body of men which has served in the British Army since 1815.

Author John Masters once called these Nepali soldiers "the bravest of the brave: the most loyal of the loyal." Over the past 170 years, more than 40,000 have died serving in the British Army. Many fought in the Falklands war.

Two unprecedented scandals linked with the Gurkhas last summer have, however, tarnished their reputation and raised questions about morale at a time when it is unclear what place they will have in the British Army in 11 years when China regains sovereignty over Hong Kong.

The disbandment of the 2nd battalion, 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles — known in the forces as "the Second Seventh" — is linked with scandal. The battalion, which is below full strength, was raised at a time when illegal immigration over the border from China was putting great pressure on British troops stationed in Hong Kong. Its disbandment will trim Gurkha forces to its strength before 1980.

It is, nevertheless, a warning signal for the future, since the British Army is likely to contract rather than expand in the years up to 2000. The Gurkha battalions, with their home garrison in Hong Kong, are thought likely by many observers to be the first to feel the scalpel when cuts are called for.

This conviction exists not least because in 1997 British troops based in Hong Kong will be replaced by Chinese People's Liberation Army forces.

Three of the remaining five Gurkha battalions are based in Hong Kong — the other two are serving in the U.K. and Brunei. They will at least have to be redeployed.

In spite of official denials, it has been suggested that uncertainty over the future has influenced morale in Gurkha ranks, and might have been a factor in the

two remarkable scandals of recent months.

In the most serious, more than 100 Gurkhas from the "First Seventh" were court-martialled and dismissed for what amounts to mutiny. A group of Gurkhas attacked and seriously injured their company commander while on a defence exercise in Hawaii in May.

No clear explanation has emerged of why the incident occurred, although an open letter from troops of the First Seventh accused the commanding officer of insulting behaviour. The commanding officer has terminated his secondment to the Gurkha regiment three years early.

In the second scandal, five Gurkhas were found guilty in the High Court in England of trying to bring into the U.K. almost HK \$2 million (\$253,000) worth of cannabis and heroin.

In the wake of what is referred to as the "Hawaii incident" Mr. John Stanley, U.K. Minister of State for the Armed Forces, said in Hong Kong: "The key issue was the total breakdown of the bond of trust without which a soldier is militarily ineffective."

The consensus from the commander of British Forces in Hong Kong right up to the Ministry of Defence was that dismissal was the only course open.

Mr. Stanley nevertheless concluded: "It is regarded as an isolated incident, and it has certainly not undermined our confidence in the Gurkhas and will not affect future planning of the role of the Gurkhas after 1997."

In Nepal, where most youngsters would lose a leg to get selected into the Gurkhas, and where returned Gurkhas provide a large proportion of the country's skilled manpower, the response has been muted.

Officials meanwhile say the incident will not damage bilateral relations. The fact is that the Nepal economy stands to lose a great deal if the Gurkha link with the British army is severed — Financial Times feature.

Test of AIDS drug sparks hopes for treatment

By Jim Fuller

WASHINGTON — Recent developments in the effort to find a drug to treat acquired immune deficiency syndrome, or AIDS, have raised hopes of prolonging life for many victims of the fatal disease.

U.S. health officials have announced that early experiments with an antiviral drug, azidothymidine (AZT), prolonged the survival of certain patients with AIDS and that thousands of victims would be given access to the drug.

Tests with AZT were carried out on a select group of 282 patients who have AIDS or severe related disorders. About half of the patients were given the drug and half received placebos, sugar pills that have no medical effects. The clinical trial showed 16 deaths among the patients receiving the placebo and only one death among patients receiving AZT. Those taking the drug also had fewer infections and other AIDS-related problems.

Dr. Robert Windom, U.S. assistant secretary for health, said that based on the results of the study he has asked the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to expedite the process through which the drug can be made available to AIDS patients.

Pending approval for general marketing, Windom said the drug would initially be provided to the type of patients who were the

focus of the AZT experiment — that is, to patients who suffered their first attack of pneumocystis carinii pneumonia (PCP) within the previous 90 days. The first recipients of the drug must also be recommended by an expert in the diagnosis of AIDS and must not be enrolled in other clinical trials.

Health officials estimate that more than one-half of current AIDS patients will die from pneumocystis carinii, and another one-fifth will succumb to Kaposi's sarcoma, formerly a rare type of cancer.

Windom cautioned however that AZT is not a cure for AIDS. "Although the study results... hold great promise for prolonging life for certain patients with AIDS, uncertainties remain: Uncertainties about possible toxic effects, uncertainties about long-term benefits or ill effects," he said. "We do not want to overpromise the thousands of people who now have AIDS."

He said the study also does not indicate whether AZT may be an appropriate treatment for children, patients with Kaposi's sarcoma or persons with asymptomatic infections.

Another limiting factor for the drug, according to health officials, is that at higher doses patients may develop a condition that suppresses the production of red and white blood cells by the bone marrow.

On the other hand, the drug is apparently able to cross the

brain-blood barrier. This is a crucial step in preventing encephalopathy, an AIDS-related brain disorder that results in brain damage. Also, the drug is administered in pill form, which means it could be taken at home.

AIDS kills by attacking cells that are essential to the body's immune system for fighting off disease. AIDS victims die of cancer, pneumonia and other diseases they might otherwise have fought off. The virulent virus has already claimed the lives of half of its more than 24,000 victims in the United States. AIDS tends to be spread by sexual contact, generally between homosexuals, or by the sharing of needles for intravenous drug use.

In another development, the Benjamin Franklin Society, publisher of the Saturday Evening Post, reports that the safe and inexpensive amino acid lysine, readily available at drugstores and supermarkets, may provide a major breakthrough in AIDS prevention. Lysine is also believed by many doctors to be an effective treatment for herpes, another sexually transmitted disease.

Dr. Cory SerVaas, the society's medical director, told reporters recently that two AIDS victims both physicians, had experienced dramatic relief from their symptoms after taking a combination of the amino acid and two well-known prescription drugs, zalcitabine and zalcitabine.

The first physician, whose

illness dated back to 1983, alleged that he felt like "death warmed over" before his treatment, but now jogs, lifts weights, and no longer feels fatigued after work," she said. "He has been completely well for more than a year."

The society is putting together computerised lists of volunteers who may be interested in going on the regimen used by the doctors who recovered. SerVaas said the society will follow up on these patients in the hope that the new regimen can be investigated scientifically.

Researchers at the National Cancer Institute report that they have created a non-deadly version of the AIDS virus, raising hopes that mutant germ could be used to develop a treatment or vaccine for the disease.

Researchers said that the laboratory-altered virus will not destroy the deadly AIDS virus but can compete with it in the victim's body. They theorise that if an AIDS victim were given the altered virus, it would go after the same immune-system cells that the AIDS virus attacks, but would not kill them. Instead the altered virus would prevent the fatal AIDS virus from infecting the cell.

However, researchers still need to learn much more about possible negative effects the altered virus might have on people before human tests are scheduled. Animal tests could begin soon — U.S. Information Agency.

Teaching young ladies how to function in high society

By Brenda Watson
The Associated Press

GLION, Switzerland — High in the Swiss Alps, in a turn-of-the-century villa with a breathtaking view of Lake Geneva, Viviane Neri is teaching young ladies how to function in high society.

But unlike finishing schools of the past, her curriculum includes how to clean a toilet and run a vacuum cleaner.

"It helps keep them from becoming maids," Mrs. Neri, who has run the Villa Pierrefeu finishing school since 1972, said in an interview. "Anyway, you can't train a servant to do something well if you don't know how to do it yourself."

Her elegant villa is one of a handful of finishing schools in Switzerland.

In the early part of the century, Switzerland, with its many private schools for young ladies, was the place for the daughters of the well-to-do in Europe and the United States to learn European culture and French.

But finishing schools have gone out of fashion. Many have introduced courses in typing, business and hotel management. But Mrs. Neri's school is among the most traditional. It offers only a rigorous finishing programme.

The school also is the most expensive. A one-year stay costs 50,000 Swiss francs (\$30,000). Others average about 30,000 francs (\$18,000).

Students come from around the world because "there really isn't another school like this," said Mrs. Neri. There are some in England that come close, she said, but they don't require fluency in French.

Finishing schools were among the many private schools and universities in Switzerland that successfully fought a proposed law last summer that would have sharply limited the stay of foreign students.

The Villa Pierrefeu has room for 34 students and is full every year. This year's group mostly consists of West Europeans and Latin Americans. But there is one student from the United States, several Australians and one Japanese.

Courses include protocol, etiquette and "savoir-vivre," or how to be at ease in any situation. Students also must become fluent in French and English.

"I never tell people at home that I'm going to a finishing school because they think I'm just going to lay off in some posh school and not do anything. It's quite the opposite. We have to do everything," says Rebecca, 18, from Wichita, Kansas.

The students declined to give their last names for privacy reasons.

Students at Villa Pierrefeu have 38 hours of classes a week. They make their own beds, clean their bedrooms and iron their own clothes.

Computerised road maps move along with the car

By Joy Aschenbach
National Geographic

WASHINGTON — As surely as the Earth is round, maps are flat — pieces of paper that you hold in your hand. Not any more.

When you reach into the glove compartment for that familiar folded road map, you may pull out a cassette tape instead. The electronic road map, already available in California, shows up as green lines on a dashboard-mounted viewing screen.

The map automatically moves as the car moves; streets that go by outside also go by on the screen. The electronic map not only lets you know where you are (a small stationary arrow), but where you are going (a flashing star), and how to get there.

You can zoom in for a close-up of the neighbouring streets, or view the highway network of an entire metropolitan area. "You'll

never get lost again," claims John Korchin of Etak Inc., manufacturer of the nation's first in-car navigation system.

Korchin contends that glancing at a map on a screen is no more distracting to the driver than looking at the speedometer. "It saves fumbling for a paper map or squinting at street signs," he says.

The California company has applied modern technology to an ancient Polynesian concept of navigation, known as *etak*. The Polynesians sailed the Pacific by imagining that their canoe was stationary and measuring their progress by the movement of the islands around them.

The Etak system determines the car's position by "augmented dead reckoning." Its components include a compass, shoe-box-size computer in the trunk, motion sensors on the wheels, and a map data base (a series of map cassettes, four to cover the San Francisco Bay area, six for Los

Angeles).

Etak will eventually make cassettes for the rest of the country. It has licensed its design to General Motors, which plans to offer the mapping system as an option on its cars within a few years.

Other U.S. automakers are developing systems of their own, some using satellites to track the car's movements. "It's accepted throughout the industry that in-car navigation is just around the corner," a spokesman for one automaker says.

The revolution in road maps is part of the renaissance that computers started in cartography. It's been called the biggest revolution in mapmaking since Columbus discovered that the Earth wasn't flat, and it has moved into high gear in the 1980s.

"Actually cartography's in its fourth major technological revolution. The printing press brought about the first," explains

Phillip C. Muehrcke, professor of geography at the University of Wisconsin.

Computers have turned mountains and canyons, rivers and roads, towns and international borders into millions of numbers.

These digitised pieces of maps are stored on reels of tape. At the command of the computer cartographer, who sits at a control console in a dimly lit room, they can be called up on a multicoloured display screen and manipulated in hundreds of ways.

"Before, you had to make do with maps somebody else made and showed in a drawer. Now you can tailor mapping to whatever needs you have," Muehrcke says.

Enter a new command and rivers can be made wider or narrower. Misaligned roads can be rerouted. Type in a different number on a world map, and the ocean becomes bluer. Design a symbol for the thousands of tiny dots that make up international

boundaries and they no longer have to be added manually, one by one.

If Argentina should decide to relocate its capital 500 miles south to Patagonia, the computer can make the move from Buenos Aires in minutes.

When art and cartography are combined, computers do double duty: Lenin appeared larger than the other European leaders in a group portrait painted for a National Geographic historical map; the computer saved the time of having the artist repaint it. Within a few hours, it was able to shrink Lenin and enlarge Churchill.

Rand McNally, the nation's largest non-government mapmaker, is building an electronic data base for the United States, Canada, and Mexico, from city streets to interstate highways. Computer will speed the updating of the publisher's U.S. road atlas; last year's 20,855 changes were

made by hand. In the future, computers will combine in-car navigation with information on points of interest, food, and lodging.

Also in the future, says Wayne Fish of Logistics Systems, which already provides computerised routing for the trucking industry and some automobile clubs, are roadside computer terminals.

"You'll punch in your place of origin, destination, and up to 15 stops in between," he says. By far the largest computerised mapper in the United States is the federal government, which uses high-tech cartography for everything from missile guidance systems and bomber targeting to taking the national census.

The U.S. Geological Survey has captured the entire country on computer at a small scale, and is in the process of digitising all of its 55,000 large-scale (1:24,000) maps, a task that is expected to take until the end of the century.

Randa Habib's Corner

A simple request

TOGETHER with extending congratulations to the members of the newly formed Greater Amman Municipal Council, I have few remarks to make with the hope that they will be taken into consideration.

I invite the members of the council to take a drive through Sweifbeh, or Tia Al Ali or the Seventh Circle area, and to note the dreadful condition of the roads to count the holes in the streets and to measure their depth.

Let them notice the inexplicable fact that some private roads are perfectly well asphalted while the main ones are still covered with mud, and let them ask the concerned municipalities for explanation.

On their way, the members of the council will definitely note that in front of every building under construction heaps of cement, stones and pieces of iron and steel obstruct the already awful roads. And instead of sidewalks planted with trees and flowers like the lucky inhabitants of some areas in Amman can see, the people of the suburbs have to bear daily the site of mounds of garbage gathered on the main roads for the great pleasure of the cats in the area.

The council may also check on the reasons that pushed some municipalities to postpone the flashing work on gardens, although the projects are included in the city plan.

And finally, please gentlemen of the council, (unfortunately women go unrepresented here), note that all what the people of the suburbs wish is to be able to reach their homes, with their cars, to have their garbage collected regularly and to walk on asphalt not on mud. Is it too much to ask?

American affluence — at what long-term cost?

A recent study has shown that Americans are enjoying affluence undreamed of by their forefathers despite pockets of poverty strewn across the country. But economists are questioning the long-term effects of the great jump forward in the standard of life in the United States ...

By John Cuniff
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Researchers say Americans have reached an affluence their forefathers could not imagine. But some economists are worried about the long-term cost of America's great leap forward in its standard of living.

A recent report by the Conference Board, a privately-funded international business information service, and the U.S. Census Bureau says the American standard of living has increased at a rate of more than 30 per cent every decade.

"While there are still distressing pockets of poverty in this country, even the most ardent utopian at the turn of the century could not dream of the affluence and quality of life in today's America," said Fabian Lindau, the author of the report and the executive director of the Conference Board's Consumer Research Centre.

The report, titled "How We Live: Then and Now," profiles the country's economic progress during most of the 20th century. It found that in the past 35 years the goods and services consumed by the average American have doubled.

However, economists of all persuasions argue that consumption is often at the expense of production and doesn't necessarily mean progress.

The output of the average U.S. worker more than doubled during the first half of the century, and doubled again in the past 35 years.

But economists warn that the statistic can be misleading. They say U.S. production growth has lagged recently. And some argue that much of the current U.S. affluence is at the expense of yesterday and tomorrow.

They explain that yesterday's productivity increases made possible the great consumer society, and borrowing from future generations through government debt has helped sustain it.

The study, however, predicted technological breakthroughs and more stable prices would soon put U.S. productivity back on its long-term growth path.

The report said that in 1915 it took about 60 cents of a household's dollar just to buy the necessities of life — food, clothing and shelter. Now it costs 45 cents.

The study found 40 per cent of all American households now own two or more automobiles, up from 15 per cent 25 years ago. The telephone is in almost every home but in 1950, two out of every five homes were without a phone.

Last year alone, the study said, shipments to the nation's retailers included 9 million microwave ovens, 14 million electric coffee makers, 21 million television sets, 7 million video recorders, 28 million portable tape players, 19 million hair dryers and 20 million home security devices.

The U.S. consumer splurge is fuelled by an abundance of money to lend, courtesy of credit-card issuers, a tax system that makes interest tax-deductible, and the Federal Reserve Bank, the nation's central bank.

And because of the splurge U.S. consumers are deep in debt. So is the government, which has sought to serve the consumer appetite for services not directly available in the marketplace. Budget deficits are a way of life.

Many economists contend that because of government and consumer borrowing there is less money available for investment in productivity, which is the engine of a consumer society.

The study concluded that in the century's first 50 years, worker output increased because of innovation, invention, more efficient management and the availability of capital.

It said savings were invested in more productive plants, machinery and processes, and all three were kept up to date by the need to meet competition.

The Tax Foundation, a private educational and research organisation, said that today government borrowing has cut the gross savings rate by a third.

In the second quarter of this year, the Tax Foundation said gross private savings of individuals and businesses were accumulated at an annual rate of nearly \$719 billion. But federal deficits reduced that by \$237 billion.

Some of those worried about the debt were pleased that the new U.S. tax law will discontinue deductions for interest on most consumer loans. They said the measure could encourage consumers to pay as they go, and may be save some money that can be invested in productivity.

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Mandlikova defeats Shriver to win Jason Classic tennis

BRISBANE, Australia (AP) — Hana Mandlikova of Czechoslovakia ended a yearlong drought Sunday by defeating Pam Shriver of the United States 6-2, 2-6, 6-4 in the final of the \$100,000 Jason Classic Women's Tennis Tournament at Brisbane's Milton Courts.

Top seeded Mandlikova, winless in 1986, took out the first Virginia Slims Series title of 1987 in impressive style.

The world number four served particularly well, getting out of tight spots twice in the final set. Second-seeded Shriver fought hard throughout the 1 hour 36 minute struggle in hot, humid conditions.

"I made six finals last year and didn't manage to win any of them," said Mandlikova, the 24-year-old former U.S. Open

champion. "It's good to get off to a much better start this year." Mandlikova's victory stamped her as one of the major contenders for the Australian Open, which begins at Kooyong on Jan. 12. She showed a complete mastery of the fast Brisbane grass court against a taller opponent who is renowned as a serve-and-volleyer. The start of the match was delayed 90 minutes by rain, but Mandlikova then romped through the first set, playing excellent attacking tennis.

Shriver hit back to take the second set, but was constantly in trouble in the third.

Mandlikova broke the American's serve in the fifth game of the decisive set, but then dropped her own immediately afterwards.

Mandlikova, who has applied to become an Australian citizen, broke again in the ninth game — and this time held her own serve to take the match.

"Hana came up with superb serves at the right time," Shriver said afterwards.

"I had 15-40 on her last two service games and she held them both. She proved too tough."

Mandlikova and Shriver have both entered the New South Wales women's open, which begins Monday at Sydney's White City Courts.

Australia collapses to W. Indian cricketers

PERTH (R) — Australia suffered more humiliation when it collapsed before the West Indian pace attack to 91 all out in its final match of the four team one-day tournament Sunday.

Set the stiff task of 256 to win in 50 overs, the Australian batsmen failed totally to cope with the Caribbean barrage of Joel Garner, Tony Gray, Michael Holding and Courtney Walsh.

Only Steve Waugh, who made 29, reached double figures and had it not been for 12 extras the position would have been worse. Later Australian captain Allan Border criticised both umpires for leaving unpenalised so many short-pitched balls.

Border said: "If there's no rule, that's fine. But the rule is there and it must be administered strictly."

The 164-run defeat was Australia's second worst in one-day contests — behind the 206-run drubbing received at New Zealand's hands at Adelaide Oval last season.

Australia was never in the hunt, disappointing the 21,000 crowd who had turned up to watch a game rendered meaningless by both countries' two defeats earlier in the tournament.

Opener David Boon was out for two and then had to endure booing from the home crowd as he walked back. He was also visibly upset by the remarks of a spectator as he walked down the players' tunnel.

Garner, Gray (three for nine off 7.4 overs) and Holding took eight wickets between them at a cost of 51 runs from 23.4 overs.

A brilliant 100 from man of the match Gordon Greenidge and a whirlwind unbeaten ninth-wicket stand of 45 from just 26 balls between Holding (53) and Gray (10) helped swell the West Indian total.

The result left the West Indies in its place in the tournament. The final between England and Pakistan is on Wednesday.

Kookaburra III gains spot in defender final

FREMANTLE, Australia (AP) — Kookaburra III, skippered by Ian Murray, sailed its way into the finals of the America's Cup defenders' trials Sunday by trouncing her stablemate, Kookaburra II, in heavy winds and seas by 8:57 minutes.

It was the worst defeat handed Peter Gilmour's crew during the defenders' trials.

The victory gave Kookaburra III six victory points for a total of 71.

Australia IV remained tied with Kookaburra III as it picked up an easy six points without leaving the dock. Colin Beashel's Aussie IV had been scheduled to race Steak'n Kidney, but the Sydney boat has been excused from further racing and six points will be granted to her opponents.

Kookaburra II now is in the uneasy position of being forced to defeat Australia IV on Monday and hope that Murray can do the same Tuesday.

Australia II must win one of its last two races to gain the finals.

Kookaburra III gets the day off

Monday and with it six points. Australia IV would have clinched a spot in the finals if it had not lost a race in a protest hearing. Beashel's boat had pounded Kookaburra II Saturday, but later was found guilty of not giving Kookaburra II right of way and disqualified. This cost her six points.

The defenders' finals, a best of nine series, are scheduled to begin Jan. 14.

Murray outmanoeuvred Gilmour at the start by 15 seconds and then added to his lead at every mark. The big margin came on the final beat to the finish line. Kookaburra III led by 3:24 at the final mark and then lowered her spinnaker and floored the gas pedal on the beat to the finish line.

The Fremantle doctor, the name the locals give winds which sweep across the Indian Ocean off this port city, provided a good breeze for the two racers. The winds started at 24 knots and reached 27 knots at the finish with the seas being around 5 feet (1.5 metres) in height.

Irwin takes Florida golf

FORT MYERS, Florida (R) — Hale Irwin posted a final round two-under-par 70 to win the \$250,000 Florida Invitational Golf Tournament and the \$75,000 top prize.

Irwin, who started the day in a first place tie with 22-year-old first round leader Scott Verplank, finished with a nine-under-par 207 on Saturday five shots ahead of Verplank and Calvin Peete.

Verplank and Peete finished at four-under-par 212 to share second place. Verplank, who slipped to a final round 75, and Peete, who fired a three-under-par 70 on the day, each received 31,250.

Irwin's victory in this 54-hole, 12-player tournament at the

7,162-yard Fiddlesticks Country Club, marked the second consecutive year he has won a pre-season event. Last year he captured the Bahamas Classic by six shots prior to the start of the PGA tour season.

West German Bernhard Langer was alone in fourth place at two-under-par 214, good for \$17,250. He shot a two-over-par final round of 74.

Mark O'Meara's four-under 68 was the best of the day, but it was his first sub-par round of the tournament and he finished tied for fifth with Davis Love at one-under-par 215.

Despite a bogey on the first hole, Irwin settled down and made three birdies on the back nine.

Cleveland, Washington win in playoffs

NEW YORK (R) — The Cleveland Browns and the Washington Redskins moved a step closer to the Superbowl Saturday with victories in conference semifinals.

The Redskins shocked the Bears 27-13 to end Chicago's chances of repeating as Superbowl champions and the Browns were forced to go into double overtime to beat the New York Jets 23-20.

The Bears led by six points at the half 13-7. But Washington capitalised on three of four Chicago turnovers and put 20 points on the board in the second half against the premier defence in the league to advance to the National Football Conference (NFC) Championship.

Washington quarterback Jay Schroeder connected with wide

receiver Art Monk twice for touchdowns with the Bears blitzing. They added two Jess Atkinson field goals and another touchdown for their 27 points.

Washington stopped future hall of fame running back Walter Payton all day and shut-out the Bears in the second half.

In an earlier American Football Conference (AFC) semifinal, Cleveland beat the Jets 23-20 with a dramatic come from behind win on a field goal in double overtime.

The underdog Jets, leading 20-10 with two minutes left on the clock, looked to have the game won. But the Browns fought back, scoring a touchdown and then tying the game 20-20 on a 22-yard field goal with just seven seconds left.

After both teams failed to score

in the first sudden death overtime period, a 27-yard field goal by Mark Mosely capped an 11-play, 59-yard drive a minute and a half into double overtime, ending the second longest game in National Football League (NFL) history as well as the Jets Superbowl chances.

Washington will play the winner of Sunday's game between the New York Giants and the San Francisco 49ers next Sunday in the NFC Championship game. Cleveland will meet the winner of the AFC semifinal between the Denver Broncos and the New England Patriots.

The winners of next week's conference championship will clash on Sunday, Jan. 25, in the Superbowl in Pasadena, California.

Chicago snaps Detroit's winning streak

CHICAGO (AP) — After failing to reach the 40-point mark in his last two games, Michael Jordan scored 47 points, leading the Chicago Bulls to a 124-119 NBA victory over Detroit, snapping the Pistons' four-game winning streak.

Jordan had scored 34 and 31 points in the Bulls' previous two games. Saturday night's effort marked the 14th time in the Bulls' last 19 games that he has reached the 40-point plateau, and the 17th time this season. He leads the NBA in scoring with a 37.6 average.

Rookie forward Brad Sellers, making his first NBA start, added 27 points and 12 rebounds for the Bulls. Isiah Thomas led the Pistons with 36 points, followed by Adrian Dantley's 22.

After the lead seasawed early, Chicago scored 12 of the last 14 points of the first quarter for a 37-25 advantage, and the Pistons never caught up.

Rockets 138, Sonics 114

In Houston, Lewis Lloyd scored 19 of his 25 points in the first quarter as the Houston Rockets took charge early and went on to defeat the Seattle SuperSonics 138-114.

The win was in the second meeting between the two teams since, the Sonics handed the Rockets their worst loss ever, a 136-80 drubbing on Dec. 6. Seattle also beat Houston 114-100 on Dec. 18.

Houston tied seven players in double figures, including Ralph Sampson with 21 and Mitchell Wiggins with 19. Dale Ellis and Xavier McDaniel had 21 each for Seattle, which lost its fourth straight.

Houston dominated the first period, taking a 43-23 lead as Lloyd went 7-for-7 from the field and hit five of six free throws.

Hawks 114, Knicks 92

In Atlanta, Dominique Wilkins scored 21 points and seven Atlanta teammates scored in double figures as the Hawks snapped the New York Knicks' four-game winning streak with a 114-92 victory.

Atlanta went ahead to stay at 15-13 on a Kevin Willis dunk with 6:23 left in the first period, and led 64-48 at the half. The Hawks increased the margin to 97-67

after three quarters, and the Knicks got no closer than 99-80 in the fourth period.

Wilkins scored 15 points in the first quarter in a shooting contest with Patrick Ewing, who scored 12 of his 16 points in that period. Dominique's brother Gerald scored 20 points for the Knicks.

Nets 118, Clippers 97

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Tony Brown scored 22 points as the New Jersey Nets defeated Los Angeles 118-97, the 11th straight loss for the Clippers.

The Nets scored 20 of the game's first 22 points and outrebounded the Clippers 75-51. Los Angeles has now won just one of its last 24 games.

With 4:34 left in the third period, New Jersey opened its biggest lead of the game at 77-53. The Clippers got as close as 88-77 early in the fourth quarter on two free throws by Tim Kempton. But New Jersey then scored 12 of the next 16 points to ice the victory.

Mavericks 106, Spurs 89

In San Antonio, Texas, Detlef Schrempf scored 19 points as the Dallas Mavericks won their fourth straight game, a 106-89 decision over the San Antonio Spurs.

The loss dropped San Antonio to 8-23 and 15 games below .500, the team's worst record since it joined the NBA 10 years ago. The Mavericks led 50-45 at the half and then used a 12-4 spurt at the start of the third period to pull ahead 62-48. The closest the Spurs could get after that was 65-57 with 4:25 left in the third quarter.

Napoli suffers 1st defeat

ROMA (R) — Diego Maradona's Napoli suffered its first defeat of the season Sunday, going down 3-1 at Fiorentina and allowing Internazionale Milan to take over at the top of the Italian First Division on goal difference.

Inter beat lowly Atalanta 1-0 with an 18th minute goal from Pietro Fanna.

Maradona, who scored his side's only goal, often threatened the Fiorentina goal but he found goalkeeper Marco Landucci in superb form.

Fiorentina, unperturbed by Napoli's 13-match unbeaten

league run, attacked from the start and went ahead in the sixth minute with a goal from Argentine Ramon Angel Diaz.

Veteran Giancarlo Antognoni made it two in the 28th minute when he curled home a free kick from just outside the penalty area.

Maradona's goal came six minutes into the second half, but Paolo Monelli wrapped up the game for the home side with its third just before the end.

Champion Juventus found some of its old form after a disappointing run when it came from behind to beat Verona 2-1.

Verona went ahead in the 27th minute with a goal from Danish international Preben Elkjaer — a lead it held until midway through the second half when Lionello Manfredonia pounced on a loose ball after a defensive error and scored.

Antonio Cabrini scored the winner two minutes from time, putting Juventus fourth in the table two points behind the leader.

Soccer greats prepare for Pele Cup

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (AP) — Soccer king Pele and other greats from years past spent Saturday in last minute training for the first Pele Cup, a tourney among countries that have won the World Cup at least twice.

Former soccer stars over 34-years-old such as Pele, Adu, Carpegiani and Edu from Brazil, Rudy Fischer, Wolfgang Overath and Paul Breitner from West Germany practised under cloudy skies for the exhibition games, which begin Sunday in Sao Paulo.

The opening match of the tourney, which runs through Jan. 18, will be between Brazil and Italy and will be a rerun of the final of the 1970 World Cup won by Brazil 4-1.

Organisers told the Estado De Sao Paulo newspaper that 38,000 of the 60,000 seats in the Pacaembu Stadium were already taken for the first game.

Many of the greats who helped Brazil to victory will be back on the field, including soccer king

Pele, who retired from international play in 1971 and Brazilian soccer in 1974.

Brazilians haven't seen their idol play live since that year. "I am in shape to play the whole game," 46-year-old Pele told the Jornal Do Brasil radio. "But I have to confess that I am very nervous."

Pele said he expected to see lots of nervous players on the field Sunday as emotions ran high with old friends and competitors playing together for the first time in years.

Pele has said he will play only in the first of the tourney games but Brazil team coach Luciano Do Valle said he thought Pele would end up "changing his mind and might play in the game against Uruguay," he told the Estado De Sao Paulo newspaper.

Besides Brazil and Italy, Uruguay, West Germany, and Argentina will participate in the two-week event, which has official recognition from FIFA, the world

governing body of soccer.

The Italian team has been training in Rio for much of the past week and has complained about the organisation of the tourney, which frequently has left them without a proper place to train, they said.

The German team, which will play without soccer great Franz Beckenbauer, arrived Friday, and will be led by coach Raiball.

Argentina's squad was to include Brindisi, Mas, Babington, Villa, Kempes and Albrecth, while Uruguay was to feature such all-time stars as 46-year-old Hector Silva, Eduard Gerolami and Jose Cabrera.

The starting line-ups for the Brazil-Italy game were as follows: Brazil: Do, Toninho, Jaime, Djalma Dias, Marco Antonio, Teodoro, Carpegiani, Rivellino, Cafuringa, Pele, and Edu.

Italy: Bordon (Albertosi), Maleda, Roversi, Cuccuredu, Facchetti, Marini, Sala, Beluci, Maraschi, Bonisegna and Poletti.

Tennis star Mats Wilander marries S. African model

SHONGWENI, South Africa (R) — Swedish tennis star Mats Wilander, sporting a hint of pink, married South African model Sonya Mulholland in a pink and white tent amid tight security Saturday.

Private security guards checked the names and car registrations of guests arriving for the wedding on a luxury estate in South Africa's wealthy sugar-farm area.

Journalists were allowed only a brief photo call before Mulholland, 24, declared: "I've had enough," and gestured to photographers to leave.

Wilander, ranked third in the world, is a tennis hero in Sweden but his decision to marry Mulholland in South Africa caused a Swedish press outcry. But anti-apartheid groups there have said it was a private matter

and they respected his pledge not to play in the republic as a protest against Pretoria's race policies.

Mulholland and her bridesmaids and flower girls wore pink and white. Wilander, 23, carried through the colour scheme by adding a pink cummerbund to his black suit and white shirt.

Fellow Swedish tennis player Joakim Nystrom was best man. Wilander and Mulholland were married in a pink-and-white manquee before about 100 guests, but reporters were unable to establish whether it was a religious ceremony.

It took place on the lawns of the large, single-story house where Mulholland's sister Bly Louw lives.

Wilander and his bride plan to continue living in the apartment they share in New York.

American wins girl's 16 tennis

PORT WASHINGTON, New York (AP) — Sixth-seeded Carrie Cunningham of the United States, ousted Erica O'Neill of the United States, 6-4, 7-5 in a two-hour match Saturday to win the girl's 16 title in the Port Washington International Tennis Junior Championships.

Top-seeded Sabine Appelmans beat Caroline Van Renterghem, both from Belgium, 6-4, 6-4, in the girl's 14 final.

In the boy's 16 title match, no. 3 Vladimir Petrusenko of the Soviet Union rallied for 4-6, 6-0, 6-3 upset of second-seeded Andrei Cherkasov, also of the Soviet Union. No. 8 Dirk Dier of West Germany beat Bill Kyriakos of Brazil 7-6, 6-4 for the boy's 14 championship.

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Weekly Financial Report

By Fouad Batshon

The following report summarises trading activities in Amman of major European and Arab currencies as well as gold prices. The writer is a foreign exchange dealer at Halim Salji and Sons Co.

AMMAN — Last week, the U.S. dollar traded much lower on the JD and other European currencies. The main reason behind the low value of the dollar against all other currencies centres on the extremely bad American economic figures that were released recently.

The dollar traded between 0.342 to 0.3495 fils on the JD while dealers in Amman stood aside because of the end of the year.

Charts indicate that the dollar is in an extremely oversold situation and this week may begin its upward correction.

Trading in European currencies

Sterling rose to new highs against the JD and the dollar because of the high North Sea oil price and the lower dollar. Sterling traded between 0.4985 to 0.5150 fils on the JD. The DM, SF and yen rose also to new highs. The DM traded between 0.171 to 0.182 fils, the SF between 0.2085

to 0.221 fils and the yen between 0.00125 to 0.00135 fils on the JD.

World trading in metals

The weaker dollar and the higher oil prices pushed the metals higher.

Gold rose from a low of \$389 an ounce to \$407 an ounce. Platinum rose from \$457 an ounce to \$485 an ounce. Silver from \$5.25 an ounce to \$5.52 an ounce.

Charts indicate that metals cannot continue their upward correction before testing once again lower levels this week.

Trading in Arab currencies

The Lebanese lira crashed to new and record lows against the dollar. The LL traded around the 93.11 to the dollar and 300 to the JD last week mostly because of the instable political and economic situation.

The Syrian lira maintained its value against the dollar trading between 70 to 76 SLJD.

Gold prices in Amman according to the daily bulletin presented by the Jordan Jewellery Store Co.

Gold per gramme 21 carats Buy JD 4.000 Sell JD 4.200
Gold per gramme 18 carats Buy JD 4.500 Sell JD 4.800
Rashedi Lira JD 32
Old Sovereign JD 38

Turkey opens first free trade zone

ANKARA (R) — Prime Minister Turgut Ozal Saturday opened Turkey's first free trade zone, intended to boost export earnings, in the Mediterranean port of Mersin.

The zone, one of four planned, will be outside Turkish customs borders and operations will be free of all domestic taxation. Strikes and labour unions are banned there.

Mr. Ozal was quoted by the semi-official Anatolian News Agency as saying at the opening: "In the coming years free zones will be an important part of our policy of opening up to the outside. We will also have free zones in Adana, Izmir and Antalya. They will facilitate our exports and make our imports cheaper."

But diplomats said the zones would have to be abolished if Turkey succeeded in becoming a

full member of the European Community (EC), because they contravene the EC principle of free competition by applying a taxation regime discriminately.

Mr. Ozal has said he plans to apply for full EC membership this year.

A government spokesman told Reuters that 238 companies had applied to operate in the Mersin zone. Their specialities included manufacturing, import-export, assembly and exhibition work.

Five of the total are Turkish banks. Officials say they want to encourage offshore banking in the zones, but have yet to publish detailed provisions for this.

The Mersin facility, run by a private company, Mesbas — in which the state has a minority share — has its own wharf, telecommunications and other infrastructure.

The second zone at Antalya.



Turgut Ozal

also on the Mediterranean, is due to open within a month. Those at Izmir on the Aegean and Adana on the Mediterranean are still in the planning stage.

Peking's first financial market opens

PEKING (AP) — Peking's first money market opened Saturday, with about 550 million yuan (\$149 million) changing hands in the first two hours of trading.

The official Xinhua News Agency said the market, run by the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, offers services in interbank borrowing and lending, exchange of stocks and negotiable securities and financial consultation.

Fourteen financial institutions took part in first-day transactions, the report said. It said crowds of people, including onlookers, filled the office near the Temple of Heaven in southern Peking.

Xinhua said the Tianqiao Department Store Co. offered 305,000 yuan (\$82,000) worth of stock for sale, and that most buyers were individuals.

It said one young woman bought 30,000 yuan (\$8,100) worth of stock for her husband, who runs a factory in a Peking suburb. The average wage of a Chinese worker is about 1,000 yuan (\$270) a year.

The department store is offering interest and dividend rates 100 per cent higher than those offered by banks, it said.

The report did not say if any other companies sold stocks.

China's first stock market opened in Shanghai last fall, with two companies selling shares. Almost all shares were purchased on the first day, and there have been almost no transactions since

then.

The market there, also run by the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, imposed a 15 per cent maximum that can be earned on shares from interest and dividends. Financial centres, now being encouraged by the government to raise badly needed capital for development, have also opened in Shenyang, Wuhan, Chungking (Chongqing) and other cities.

People favour reforms, survey indicates

Meanwhile, a survey of more than 3,300 Chinese indicates most of them favour economic reforms which they hope will improve their employment opportunities and end the system of state job allocation, the Xinhua News Agency said.

Xinhua said the poll was sponsored by the state-run Workers Daily (Gongren Ribao) and a research institute and included 3,347 respondents from 29 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions.

The report said 41 per cent of the people surveyed said the country's economic reforms are moving slowly, 10 per cent said they are going too slowly, and 21 per cent said they are going at a proper rate. Xinhua did not say what the remaining respondents thought about the reforms or their pace.

Some 71 per cent said heavily debt-ridden enterprises which cannot pay back their debts should be allowed to go bankrupt.

Taiwan plans overseas sales blitzes

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan, hard hit by changes in U.S. import policy will diversify its export markets to Europe, Asia, the Middle East and South America this year, a senior trade official said Sunday.

Mr. Vincent Siew, director of the Board of Foreign Trade, told Reuters the government would help Taiwanese businessmen with dozens of overseas sales blitzes to promote exports.

"We are sure that the Democrat-dominated U.S. Congress will introduce more protectionist bills this year to curb imports from those countries which have a large trade surplus," he said.

The Reagan administration announced on Friday it would

reduce its generalised system of preferences (GSP) trade benefits on 290 products from Taiwan and seven other developing countries.

Mr. Siew said the cuts for Taiwan, totalling 37.5 per cent or about \$1.2 billion, were the largest of the eight countries involved.

The cuts, to be effective from July 1, would have some impact on several Taiwanese industries, including footwear, machine tools and furniture, he added.

He attributed the GSP cuts and rising protectionism to Washington's larger-than-expected trade deficit of a record \$175 billion last year, up from less than \$150 billion a year ago.

Most said they were unhappy with the system of the state assigning lifetime jobs in state enterprises, Xinhua said.

Some 33 per cent said they are "strongly willing" to change their jobs, while 27.1 per cent said they were willing. Around 20 per cent said they did not care and almost the same number of people said they were unwilling or reluctant to do so.

People willing to find other jobs said their current jobs do not tap their potential or initiative.

More than 55 per cent of those surveyed said lifetime job security in state-run enterprises, known as the "iron rice bowl," should be abolished.

But the same number said they would not resign even if given a chance to make more money at another job and more than 36 per cent were unwilling to leave their home cities to work in other places where they might be paid much better.

More than 70 per cent said they want to choose their jobs themselves rather than be assigned by the state to a work unit for life.

Almost 53 per cent want their children to marry someone with a fixed job, and nearly 89 per cent said it is reasonable to fire unqualified employees, Xinhua said.

Some 71 per cent said heavily debt-ridden enterprises which cannot pay back their debts should be allowed to go bankrupt.

Dollar fall likely to go on

NEW YORK (R) — The dollar lost five per cent of its value against the West German mark in the past two weeks and traders say the latest crop of bad economic news is likely to push the currency even lower when full trading resumes Monday.

In a quiet market on Friday, with many traders on holiday, the dollar closed in New York at 1.9235 marks. It had earlier fallen to 1.9130 marks in European trading, its lowest since November 1980 when it hit 1.8810 marks.

Some dealers predict the dollar will fall below 1.90 marks in the first full trading week of 1987. Mr. Richard Jeffrey, of London brokers Hoare Govett, predicted the dollar will decline to 1.80 marks by next November.

Traders predict the dollar will decline against the Japanese yen from its current level of 158. In September, the dollar fell to 151.70 yen, its lowest since the currency was revalued after World War II.

The bearish signs for the dollar are clear. The U.S. economy is growing at a sluggish rate and economists predict the overhaul of the American tax structure will act as a drag on growth in 1987.

Most important, however, is the stubborn U.S. trade deficit, which looks like topping \$170 billion this year.

Despite the dollar's fall of more than 30 per cent in the past 15 months against such key currencies as the mark and yen, the trade gap has continued to grow and at an increasing rate.

Normally, a lower dollar would make U.S. exports more attractive abroad and would increase the price of imported items in the United States.

The Commerce Department said on Wednesday the deficit grew by \$19.22 billion in November, much more than expected by economists and wider than the \$12 billion gap in October.

"These numbers are simply incredible," Mr. Steven Cerier of Manufacturers Hanover Trust told Reuters.

Economists say that while the trade outlook for 1987 is better, that still means a huge trade deficit. Analysts say continued trade problems could push the United States to again talk the dollar lower.

The currency began its steep decline in reaction to U.S. pressure to reduce its high value in 1985, highlighted by the Plaza agreement among the five leading Western industrial countries to work toward a lower dollar.

But brokers also warn that the quiet conditions of the past few weeks make it difficult to predict what will happen as the market resumes its normal frenetic pace. Traders remain nervous about intervention, especially by West Germany. A quick pounce in the market by central banks, quickly driving up the value of the dollar, could mean huge losses for foreign currency traders.

Mr. Graham Sweet, vice-president in charge of foreign exchange trading at Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce in Toronto, said: "If there is no sign

of intervention or rhetoric from senior officials, the dollar must continue to decline."

Bank of Japan Governor Satoshi Sumita hinted on Friday that concerted central bank action would be taken to restore market stability.

Yeutter sees greater protectionist moves

Meanwhile, U.S. trade representative, Mr. Clayton Yeutter, has said there is a greater protectionist trend in the U.S. Congress this year than there was last year, a Japanese newspaper reported Sunday.

Mr. Yeutter, in an interview with Yomiuri Shimbun, said many of the newly elected members of Congress, both Democrats and Republicans, were more protectionist than those in the old Congress.

He was quoted as saying Congress would move ahead with "corrective activity of its own that could undo all the good things that have been done in terms of economic decisions by the U.S. Japan and other countries."

Urging Japan to truly open its markets to foreign goods, he said a great deal of debate was likely on reciprocity and that this could lead to a closure of U.S. markets to Japanese goods if Japanese markets remained closed.

Japan's trade surplus with the United States was \$50 billion in 1985 and probably rose to \$80 billion last year.

Mr. Yeutter was quoted as saying Congress would probably pass the Gephardt provision, which requires countries with large trade surpluses to reduce them within a certain period.

Banker expects higher oil prices

ABU DHABI (R) — The central bank governor of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) said in remarks published Saturday that he expected oil revenue increases to start this year and they could continue to the end of the century.

Sheikh Abdul Malik Al Hamar told the semi-official daily Al Itihad that revenue boosts were expected after the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) had overcome the worst crisis in its history.

"Recent developments in the oil market have confirmed that... the market has overcome the worst period of its history regarding the decrease in oil prices and OPEC's share of the international market."

Consequently, (UAE) revenue from oil exports is expected to increase and this increase could continue to the end of this century," Sheikh Al Hamar said.

Economic sources said UAE revenues would jump by 20 per cent under OPEC moves to increase oil prices to \$18 a barrel from around \$14.

The UAE has been producing up to 1.2 million barrels per day (b/d). Under new OPEC quotas agreed last month, the UAE output should decline to 902,000 b/d from the beginning of January.

UAE oil revenues, which constitute more than 90 per cent of the nation's income, slumped by more than half when oil prices fell sharply as a result of a glut in the international market.

Oil ministers of the 13-member OPEC agreed last month to cut production to increase oil prices to \$18 a barrel.

Sheikh Al Hamar predicted that the United States and the Soviet Union would be unable to continue oil production at current

levels, and this would help push up prices.

Announced reserves of the United States and the Soviet Union would last 10 to 15 years, Sheikh Al Hamar added, "and it is impossible that both countries will continue to deplete their reserves at the same levels."

He said UAE government spending, which is the main factor in activating the country's economy, would rise as a result of the increase in oil revenues.

Spending in the oil sector would also rise to prepare for the increase in demand for oil during the 1990s.

He said the government should benefit from previous economic experience and adopt a five-year or 10-year plan to utilise financial resources which would become available as a result of the expected recovery.

African oil nations to form new group

LAGOS (R) — Ten African oil-producing nations will meet in Lagos later this month to launch a consultative group called the African Hydrocarbon Association, a spokesman for the Nigerian oil industry has said.

Mr. Alex Nwokedi of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), told Reuters that representatives of Nigeria, Gabon, Algeria and Libya — all Organisation of

Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) members — would meet those of non-OPEC producers Angola, Cameroon, Congo, Tunisia, Egypt and Benin on Jan. 26 and 27 to form the group.

The meeting would be preceded by a session of experts from the 10 nations on Jan. 23 and 24, he added.

The inauguration of the African Hydrocarbon Association, conceived by the African OPEC

members in Algiers last February, was twice scheduled in Lagos last year and twice postponed.

The group is the brainchild of Nigeria, Africa's largest oil producer, which has described it as a "continental forum for consultation, dialogue and meaningful cooperation."

The new group was originally conceived against a background of tumbling world oil prices and disunity in OPEC.

YOUR DAILY Horoscope

from the Carroll Righter Institute

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 1987

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You have some good thoughts on how to obtain your long-desired aims. Today is not the day to ask for favors from those in positions of power.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) Look to an older person for good ideas on how to gain your aims. Don't rely on any bigwigs.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Study your outstanding bills and plan how best to pay them. Don't argue with your mate.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) An outside ally can give you the information you need for some new enterprise. Keep out of trouble.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) An associate will be irked if you try to handle business affairs in a different manner. Be cooperative.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) Get into pleasures that are enjoyable and forget drab, dull duties today. Revive your lagging spirits thusly.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) You find it less difficult to handle affairs at home, so forget outside recreation for the time being.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Get busy and handle correspondence you have been permitting to pile up. Avoid arguments at home.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Avoid a talkative friend who could keep you from handling important matters. Study how to improve your holdings.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Get into personal affairs. Be sure to avoid an argument between a higher-up and a co-worker.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) You can make better plans for the future. Keep your personal ambitions to yourself. Enjoy company later.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Avoid friends who could cause you to spend too much money. Study your personal wishes for the future.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Get into the outside activities that can help you to gain your fine ambitions. Show off your abilities.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BORN TODAY... he or she will be productive, but may be interested in too many things and not complete any of them. A good education, however, should be provided since much success will be possible when finally getting down to business. A lover of music and arts here.

THE Daily Crossword

by R.M. McWhirk

ACROSS

- Russ. solst
- Is the
- name
- Clamor
- Ship part
- Family circle member
- Wives of Henry VIII
- Genius
- Water holders
- Directional sign
- Homeless cat
- Sled
- Mad as a
- hen
- Stopover
- Sweedish nightingale
- Consumed
- Asian sea
- Arabic letter
- Stevenson character
- Kitchen tool
- Love's term
- Vacation spot
- Intersecting line
- Hollowed in
- Way letters
- Many letters
- News item
- Nav. off.
- Put forcibly
- Sea bird
- Or. island
- River in Peru
- Wheel nut
- Comptroller
- Attending as
- document
- Asian wasteland
- Sp. — sp.
- Birbright
- softer
- Race distance
- Concluded
- Actor Bruce
- Yemen port

DOWN

- Gumbo
- Sly look
- Equipment
- Parrot
- Road material
- Colors
- Impact
- Violinist
- Isle
- Fleet
- Yoko —
- Enterprise
- Finch
- 12-wheeled chariot
- Fled
- Undermines
- Meeting of
- Yoko
- Appendix
- Rider subject
- Excluded
- Night: abbr.
- Farm machine
- Sub out
- Demure
- "East of —"
- Amirchists
- Wasp
- Success
- Part of a door
- Squirrel's
- Legal holding
- Silvage
- Loveland
- Gr. letter
- Walled
- Knot in wood
- Na's partner
- Talented
- Legal holding
- Expert
- Firearm

Peanuts



Mutt 'n' Jeff



Andy Capp



THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



"My doctor says I need to improve my muscle tone. Got any really heavy beer mugs?"

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

KRYJE

DYPUG

TULNAW

YENNIT

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: RAVEN PRIOR HUMBLE DEPICT

Answer: The barber told him stories that could do this — CURL HIS HAIR

Peking students appeal to Deng, attack media for slanted news

PEKING (R) — Illegal wallposters reappeared at Peking University Sunday urging Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping to respond to appeals for democracy and asking students to burn the Communist Party's Peking Daily for inaccurate reporting.

Witnesses said there were at least three posters at the elite college, including a four-page open letter to Mr. Deng. Officials had ripped down all posters but one Saturday.

"We have to write to you (Deng) because there are no other channels of expression left. Please answer us," said an open letter signed by final-year mathematics student Guo Jichuan.

The letter said the students would give Mr. Deng 10 days to reply before deciding their next course of action.

The student said the official media had slanted news of demonstrations on Thursday and Friday when 1,000 students marched 15 kilometres to Tiananmen Square to secure the release of at least 24 students held in the Thursday protest.

A month-long series of nationwide students

demonstrations for democracy and press freedom has been met by an official media campaign urging students to stay off the streets and blaming the unrest on small numbers of troublemakers.

Guo's letter, read eagerly by students, said police had been too rough with students on Thursday. "Our demonstrations were all proper... they are over now but we would have marched seven-and-a-half hours in vain if our appeals for democracy are slanted by newspapers."

Mr. Deng and other members of the ruling politburo have not made public their opinions on the marches, leading to speculation that Communist Party leaders are split over the issue.

"Newspapers should report, not give opinions. There are too many opinions and too much inaccurate reporting, which has caused Peking citizens to oppose

students," the letter said. Guo's letter wished Mr. Deng good health and said students supported reforms he had instigated.

Alongside it were two unsigned posters, one of which asked students to attend a public burning of copies of the Peking Daily Monday afternoon because of its "unfair reporting" of the protests, which was separating students from the masses.

The other accused the newspaper of causing unrest with its biased reporting and said "it was the tongue of the leftists." Students at the university said they were not likely to stage more protests because of impending exams but some said they would come to watch the burning of the Peking Daily.

A foreign student at Shanghai, scene of the biggest marches, told Reuters by telephone that there were no posters on campuses there and no plans for future protests, with students busy preparing for exams.

China Sunday announced the arrest of a man for inciting students to demonstrate and

maintained its media blitz against further protests for democracy by saying that freedom of expression in the West was not unlimited.

The official Peking Daily said police arrested Kong Nian, described as a former student at Qinghua University expelled in 1984 for robbery, for inciting students at Peking Teachers University to demonstrate and attacking them when they did not.

He is the eighth person, none students, known to have been arrested since the students on at least 12 campuses across China started demonstrating a month ago for democracy and freedom. No new protests were reported overnight.

A worker has been arrested for putting up a poster at a South China Technical College urging students "to take to the streets and cause disturbances," a Hong Kong newspaper said Sunday.

The pro-Peking Wen Wei Po said Chen Xiaoping, believed to be in his 30s, was taken into custody after he tackled up the poster last week at the Huanan Institute of Technology in Canton. The daily said he was being questioned by security officials.

Coloured S. African minister swims at 'whites-only' beach

PORT ELIZABETH, South Africa (R) — South Africa's only mixed-race cabinet minister led 150 of his supporters onto a whites-only beach in this eastern Cape Town Sunday for an early-morning swim in protest against apartheid.

The Rev. Allan Hendrickse — already under fire from President P.W. Botha for attacking cabinet policies and from many in his own coloured community for joining the white-led government — took the plunge under the resentful gaze of white extremists.

The Heratigste Nasionale Party (HNP) (Reconstituted National Party), who object to any dilution of apartheid race segregation, have vowed to press charges against anyone who oversteps the traditional dividing lines between black and coloured and white beaches in Port Elizabeth.

Police stood by while Rev. Hendrickse, declaring: "This is God's beach," led men and women attending his Labour Party congress here in a high-spirited rush to the water. Police did not intervene.

Beach apartheid has become a major issue in South Africa over the Christmas holiday, with serious racial conflict around Durban, where in some areas anyone can swim and in others the water is reserved for blacks, coloureds, Indians or whites.

In Cape Town all beaches are open to all races and there has been little sign of racial friction.

The legal status of beach apartheid in Port Elizabeth has been ambiguous since the white local council, after a long and acrimonious debate, decided to open its beaches to all races.

The decision has yet to be legally ratified by the government-appointed Cape provincial administrator.

But the council has taken down the "whites only" signs at all but one of its beaches and police have been loath to prosecute offenders where no warning is displayed. The signs have been taken down at the beach Rev. Hendrickse used.

Hurricane leaves 1,000 homeless in Cook Islands

RAROTONGA, Cook Islands (AP) — Cook Islands Prime Minister Sir Tom Davis on Sunday described hurricane Sally as the "worst in living memory," and estimated that about 1,000 people representing one-tenth of the island's population had been left homeless by the storm.

Davis estimated that damage to the waterfront in the capital from huge tidal waves was more than \$25 million.

Sally roared across the South Pacific island nation early Saturday, packing winds 150 to 200 kilometres-per-hour at its peak. Waves up to 10 metres added to flooding from swollen creeks.

The storm wrecked the main street in Rarotonga, devastated government and harbour-side buildings and flattened banana and coconut crops and resorts.

Despite widespread destruction, Davis said there were no reports of casualties in the island group, 3,000 kilometres north east of Auckland, New Zealand.

Most of the homeless were evacuated before the storm. Davis said most of these were from low income areas which were "particularly hard hit by a combination of high seas, winds and flooding."

Officials estimated the economy had been set back years

by the storm damage. "It's the worst hurricane in living memory," said Davis, adding that road, harbour and electricity repair was being given highest priority.

He said island group was suffering water and power shortages.

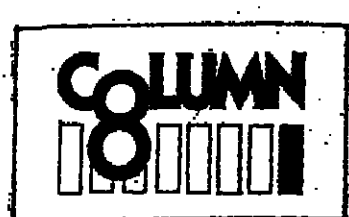
The United States and France had each offered emergency aid, he said. Paul Cleveland, the U.S. ambassador in Wellington, New Zealand, said the United States would provide \$25,000. Gaston Floste, representing the French government, flew in from Tahiti on Sunday and pledged French assistance in the form of bulldozers and other equipment.

Bulldozers had begun work by Sunday afternoon, pushing rubble into the sea, according to the Australian Associated Press (AAP).

Officials said about 80 per cent of the city of Rarotonga was severely damaged with some structures reduced to rubble.

Residents of other villages on the main island of Rarotonga gave reports of huge boulders being hurled more than 50 metres onshore by waves which destroyed houses and toppled trees.

Authorities ordered residents to boil water to guard against disease until normal sewage and drain systems could be repaired.



Baby born in hospital elevator

TOKYO (AP) — A 35-year-old woman, stuck in a hospital elevator for 40 minutes on her way to the delivery room, gave birth inside while a doctor gave instructions from outside to a nurse in the elevator, a hospital official said Sunday. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Yoko Fukushima and the 23-year-old nurse boarded the elevator at 4:45 a.m. Saturday (1945 GMT Friday), but the door would not open when they reached the third floor to go to the delivery room. He said the nurse wrapped the baby girl in her white dress and held her while Mrs. Fukushima rested on the elevator floor before police and firemen broke open the elevator door about 30 minutes later.

Chinese workers reject 'iron ricebowl'

PEKING (R) — Most Chinese workers want the right to choose their jobs even at the risk of being fired rather than settling for total security in a state-assigned post, an official survey has said. The New China News Agency said the survey of 49,278 workers showed most favour reforms which they hope will improve job prospects.

Under new laws introduced on Oct. 1 last year, people employed in state-run enterprises can be fired for shoddy work or if their firms go bankrupt — a radical change from the previous "iron ricebowl" policy guaranteeing life-time employment. People hired after that date sign contracts with enterprises for one, two or three years. They will be able to change jobs after that, with permission from employers. At present, almost all 70 million workers in state enterprises are assigned to their jobs and remain in their work units for the rest of their lives. The survey showed 70 per cent of those interviewed want to choose their own jobs and almost 89 per cent consider it reasonable to fire unqualified employees, the agency said. But it said more than half agreed with the statement: "Even if I am not interested in the job I'm holding now, I dare not resign in the hope of finding a new job."

Robert Deane Cardin, who became the first infant heart recipient at Kosair on June 13 when he was 23 days old, has been released from the hospital. The second, 1-year-old Natasha Rose Hatfield, received a new heart on Dec. 11. She is still hospitalized but is doing well, Loader said. Dr. Leonard Bailey of Loma Linda University in California has performed transplants on eight infants, four of whom are still alive.

Fuel cut-off to Jaffna 'strengthens' Tamil rebels

COLOMBO (R) — A cut-off of petrol and diesel supplies to the Jaffna peninsula, a rebel stronghold, will strengthen Sri Lanka's separatist movement, the island's guerrilla leader said in an interview published Sunday.

Sathasivam Krishnakumar, alias Kittu, of the Liberation Tiger of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) told the Sun newspaper that fuel supplies to Jaffna, 300 kilometres north of Colombo, had been cut off before and his group had anticipated the government doing it again.

"We expect that complete siege situation," he said. "It has happened many times here. Under these strains only can a revolution go on. These reprisals will strengthen us more."

Petrol and diesel supplies to Jaffna were stopped on Friday following an announcement by the LTTE, the most powerful group fighting for an independent Tamil homeland, that it would collect vehicle licensing fees on the peninsula.

The LTTE also plans to run transport services, set up traffic police, issue postage stamps and levy business turnover taxes.

The stopping of fuel supplies is the government's first reaction to LTTE plans to set up a parallel civil administration.

Military officials in Jaffna told Reuters by telephone it would take at least a week for the fuel cut-off to change normal life in the area.

Military officials said about 50 youths had been trained by the LTTE to work as traffic policemen. "They even got a uniform, black trousers, blue shirts and a cap," one said.

Kittu told the Sun the measures for running the peninsula did not amount to a unilateral declaration of independence but were aimed at meeting the failure of the government's civil administration.

He said the LTTE did not trust the government's call for direct talks and felt it was a move to drive a wedge between the group and the Indian government.

India, where around 100,000 Sri Lankan Tamils have sought refuge, has been mediating to end the bloody three-year separatist war.

Team hopes to break human-powered flight record

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, California (AP) — Practically on the heels of Voyager's historic around-the-world flight, another private group has come to the Mojave Desert with another exotic airplane to assault an aviation record. This time, a group of engineers and a part-time athlete hope to set a new record for human-powered flight. Lois McCallin, a 29-year-old financial analyst and triathlon competitor, plans to pedal an 40-kilogramme plane over a triangular, 48-kilometre course above a dry lake bed in southern California. If successful, she'll break the record set June 12, 1979, when Bryan Allen pedalled the Gossamer Albatross 35 kilometres across the English Channel. The high-tech plane arrived at Edwards Air Force Base on Dec. 23, coming in on a truck the same day the Voyager airplane landed after flying around the world without refuelling. The new effort, sponsored by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Smithsonian Institution and a U.S. Beer Company, is called the Daedalus Project, after the figure in Greek mythology who flew after fixing wax and feathers to his arms. His son, Icarus, fell and died when he flew too close to the sun and the wax in his wings melted. As the Daedalus group works toward a Jan. 14 flight, one of its biggest supporters is the man whose plane set the record.

U.S. to charge \$1 entry fee for Statue of Liberty

NEW YORK (AP) — The National Park Service will begin charging a temporary \$1 entry fee to the Statue of Liberty beginning next month, officials said. The price increase will bring the cost of a trip to the national monument to \$5. The park service is adding the entry fee to selected parks and monuments to repay a \$15-million loan from the federal government for park rehabilitation. "Up until now, the only thing (visitors) ever had to pay was the circle line for the ferry to the statue," Carol Scott, a park service spokeswoman, said Friday. The round-trip ferry ride is \$4. "It's not supposed to be a long-lived thing," Ms. Scott said, adding that the \$1 fee is due to expire in September.

'Important pieces' found in Puerto Rican hotel fire

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Investigators have found "important pieces of the jigsaw" but the cause of a New Year's Eve hotel fire that killed at least 95 people won't be known for days, Police Superintendent Carlos Lopez Feliciano says.

Lopez Feliciano said more than 150 survivors and witnesses to Wednesday's disaster have been interviewed and more than 200 agents have collected data they hope will show how and where the inferno erupted.

"We have a lot of important pieces of the jigsaw," he told reporters Saturday at the blackened Dupont Plaza Hotel

following a 2½-hour meeting that included agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and local police. He declined to disclose details of the meeting.

At the end of Friday's search, Mr. Lopez Feliciano said he thought "all victims had been found. Even so, a final search for any additional victims was mounted Saturday.

The fire, reportedly accompanied by explosions, swept through the hotel's ballroom, casino and lower four floors. Some 142 people were injured, and 21 remained hospitalised Saturday.

Congress convenes Tuesday with Democrats in control

WASHINGTON (AP) — The 100th Congress convenes Tuesday with opposition Democrats, controlling both chambers for the first time in Ronald Reagan's presidency, ready to seize the initiative on trade, arms control and the Iran-contra controversy.

The loss of eight Republican seats in Nov. 4 elections gave Democrats a 55-45 majority in the Senate. The Democrats also increased their margin in the House of Representatives to 258-177.

Lingering controversy over the Iran-contra affair will be pushed to the front as each chamber establishes special investigative committees.

But leaders scoff at the notion that the scandal, which triggered the biggest flap during Mr. Reagan's six years in office, will sidetrack regular business.

Mr. Reagan is starting his final two years in the White House, and both parties will be mindful that the record of this Congress will be a major issue in the 1988 presidential election.

Swift legislative action has been promised by Democratic Representative Jim Wright, who succeeds retiring congressman Thomas O'Neill Jr., as speaker of the house, and Senator Robert Byrd, who becomes majority leader in the Senate.

"Normally, the Senate and House have sat around until after the president's state of the union message (in late January), but this year we're not going to do that," Sen. Byrd said.

After the Senate and House convene at noon (1700 GMT) Tuesday, resolutions will be introduced in both houses to establish two select committees to investigate the diversion of covert Iranian arms sales profits to contra rebels fighting to overthrow the leftist Nicaraguan government.

The Democratic chairman of those two committees have said public hearings are unlikely before early February.

Also expected later this year is renewed debate on U.S. aid to the Nicaraguan rebels, which could lead to legislation on covert operations, arms sales and the National Security Council.

Trade legislation is expected to be on the agenda, too. A major trade bill passed the House last May but it was never acted upon by the then Republican-controlled Senate.

The House is expected to pass a similar bill quickly, and Senator Lloyd Bentsen, the incoming chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, has said he will move to get a trade bill through his committee and onto the Senate floor, possibly by summer.

Shultz to make first visit to sub-Saharan Africa

WASHINGTON (R) — Secretary of State George Shultz makes a diplomatic foray into sub-Saharan Africa this week, his first to the region since he took office four and a half years ago.

The trip will take him to six friendly, mostly moderate countries far from the political and diplomatic quagmire of southern Africa.

He will grapple with the South Africa crisis on his return to Washington where he is to meet Oliver Tambo, leader of the outlawed opposition African National Congress (ANC), later this month.

A visit to southern Africa, scene of painful setbacks for the Reagan administration's tattered policy of constructive engagement with the Pretoria government, is expected at some future date.

After a stop in Bermuda, Mr. Shultz will start his week-long Africa tour in Senegal on Thursday and go on to Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Liberia.

The purpose of the trip will be to see "some of our good friends in Africa," a State Department official said.

Most of the host countries are regarded as moderates on southern Africa issues. All have strong links to the West.

Only in Nigeria, a hardliner on South Africa and its continued rule over Namibia (South West Africa), is Shultz expected to be engaged in some tough talk.

Mr. Shultz bitterly opposed economic sanctions against South Africa but failed to prevent Congress from overruling the administration and enacting measures aimed at pressuring the Pretoria regime to dismantle the apartheid system of racial segregation.

On security issues, Mr. Shultz and his hosts are expected to agree that Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi poses a threat to regional stability.

Black survivor of New York racial attack again refuses to cooperate

NEW YORK (AP) — A black man who survived a deadly racial attack by a white gang again refused to cooperate with prosecutors Saturday, saying investigators weren't interested in hearing his side of the story.

"They only wanted to hear part of it and not all of it," Cedric Sandiford, 36, said during a two-hour news conference at a church. "So I decided to discontinue this masquerade."

Sandiford said he would cooperate only with a special prosecutor, and called on New York Governor Mario Cuomo to appoint one.

Sandiford's stepson, Michael Griffith, 23, was struck by a car and killed fleeing the gang of whites that attacked as the black man left a pizza parlor in the New York City Borough of Queens on Dec. 20. Sandiford and Timothy Grimes, 19, escaped.

Three white youths were arrested in the attack, but Queens criminal court Judge Ernest Bianchi on Monday dropped murder charges against them for lack of evidence after Sandiford refused to testify.

The attack heightened racial tensions in the area, sparking attacks by black gangs that police called retaliation. Officials this weekend were evaluating security for the city's public schools, which reopen Monday after the Christmas vacation.

Sandiford's lawyer, Alton Maddox Jr., said his client believes that the driver of the car that hit Griffith was part of the mob and ran him down intentionally.

Maddox has demanded that charges be lodged against the man, Dominick Blum, 24, before Sandiford cooperates with prosecutors.

Police have said their investigation indicates that Blum, a court officer and the son of a police officer, had nothing to do with the mob and he has not been charged.

Maddox and Grimes' lawyer, C. Vernon Mason, said Saturday they intend to use the incident to spur political and economic advancement for black people.

"This is a historic occasion," Maddox told the audience at the Abyssinian Baptist Church. "It is a day that long will be remembered in the lives of our people in their quest for liberation and freedom."

Maddox and Mason berated politicians, police, prosecutors and reporters, saying they perpetuated a racist system that denies justice to blacks.

The lawyers and several men they called on to speak portrayed the incident as an example of systemic injustice against blacks in the city, and said it has raised an opportunity to combat racism.

Moscow accuses Washington of blocking new Afghan initiative

MOSCOW (R) — The official Soviet News Agency TASS Sunday welcomed a peace drive by Afghan leader Najibullah and accused the United States of seeking to foil efforts to reach a political settlement to the Afghan war.

TASS called Mr. Najibullah's announcement of a ceasefire by Afghan troops from Jan. 15 and his plans for national reconciliation, including the establishment of a coalition government of national unity, a "bold political initiative."

But it added: "The world has once again seen for itself that whenever chances of reaching a political settlement around Afghanistan appear, the United States and some of its closest NATO allies do their best to foil these chances."

TASS said the White House and "the heads of the counter-revolutionary groupings in its keep" had shown their true countenance by dismissing Mr. Najibullah's proposals.

Washington and the Afghan guerrillas fighting the Soviet-backed Afghan government immediately rejected the terms of the ceasefire when it was first announced three days ago.

Washington said national reconciliation would have to include rebel representatives. The Muslim guerrillas said accepting

the ceasefire would mean recognising the Kabul government and accepting its orders.

The Communist Afghan government has pledged to observe the ceasefire until July 15 if it is joined by the Western-backed rebels and to guarantee safe passage to guerrilla leaders returning for talks on national reconciliation.

TASS said the national reconciliation policy was bold because it did not exclude opposition groups inclined to follow an independent line. The provision of a ceasefire showed it was a concrete programme, the agency said.

The Soviet Union, which intervened militarily in Afghanistan in December 1979, has an estimated 115,000 troops in the country helping the Afghan army to fight the rebels, according to Western estimates.

At a meeting of a newly-formed reconciliation commission Saturday, Mr. Najibullah called on the rebels to forget the past and return unarmed to their families, under guarantee of safe-conduct, according to official Kabul Radio.

"We are ready for open talks. You are welcome in any village in any town, and our leaders will receive you in the Dalkasha Palace," he said, referring to the seat of the country's parliament, the Revolutionary Council.

While conceding that the war was sapping the strength of the country, Mr. Najibullah declared that his Communist-led government was stronger than ever, adding: "The revolutionary process in Afghanistan is irreversible."

Kabul Radio also gave further details of a truce announced three days ago and already dismissed by the Pakistan-based guerrillas and the United States.

Quoting a Revolutionary Council resolution, it said that from Jan. 15 government forces would stop offensive actions and return to their permanent bases under peacetime conditions. Artillery and air strikes might also end, it said.

If the guerrillas, who call themselves Mujahideen, agreed to the ceasefire it would last initially for six months.

Mr. Najibullah said commanders had been ordered to exercise patience and ignore provocations, while troops would only fire in response to open attacks.

Mujahideen spokesmen in Pakistan have denounced the ceasefire as a fraud and pledged to continue their struggle until the estimated 115,000 Soviet troops withdraw from Afghanistan.

TASS said the new reconciliation policy would be sent to foreign leaders. These included the

governments of Iran and Pakistan, where the guerrillas have their bases, the United Nations, Organisation of Islamic Conference and Non-Aligned Movement.

Reiterating a pledge to form a coalition government of national unity with non-Communists, Mr. Najibullah said he was prepared for compromise with Islamic Organisations, monarchists and rebel leaders in exile, and opponents now in jail.

While denouncing the guerrillas as unpatriotic and enemies of their own people, he declared: "We are even ready to talk to extremists — this should not be considered a sign of weakness."

Those who have been living for years in the mountains, can at last see their wives, children and parents," the former secret police chief said. "Not only will we guarantee your security, but also not spare you any assistance."

Mr. Najibullah said both sides were tired of the war, which has sent some five million refugees — almost one-third of the population, — into exile abroad.

In eight years of war, tens of thousands of people had been killed, disabled and wounded, he said. The economy had been badly affected, with half the budget going for defence.

He sought to distance himself from earlier leaders, who had

governed Afghanistan after the Communist takeover in 1978.

"We are not the same people of eight years ago, everything changes, the leaders change," he said. "Many things which were at one time important have now, with the passage of time, lost their importance."

Mr. Najibullah took over as Communist Party chief last May in place of Babrak Karmal, who was put in power by the intervention of Soviet forces in December 1979. Since May many Karmal supporters have been removed from powerful positions.

The Revolutionary Council resolution declared that Islam, the faith of the overwhelming majority of Afghans, would be enshrined as the national religion in the second article of the new constitution.

It also ordered the setting up of district reconciliation commissions with far-reaching powers of local government, made up of village elders, leading Muslims, and "in certain cases leaders of armed groups" — a reference to the guerrillas.

The bodies would be overseen by a supreme extraordinary commission for national reconciliation, and would have control over such things as local courts, distribution of state medicines and seeds, and conscription.